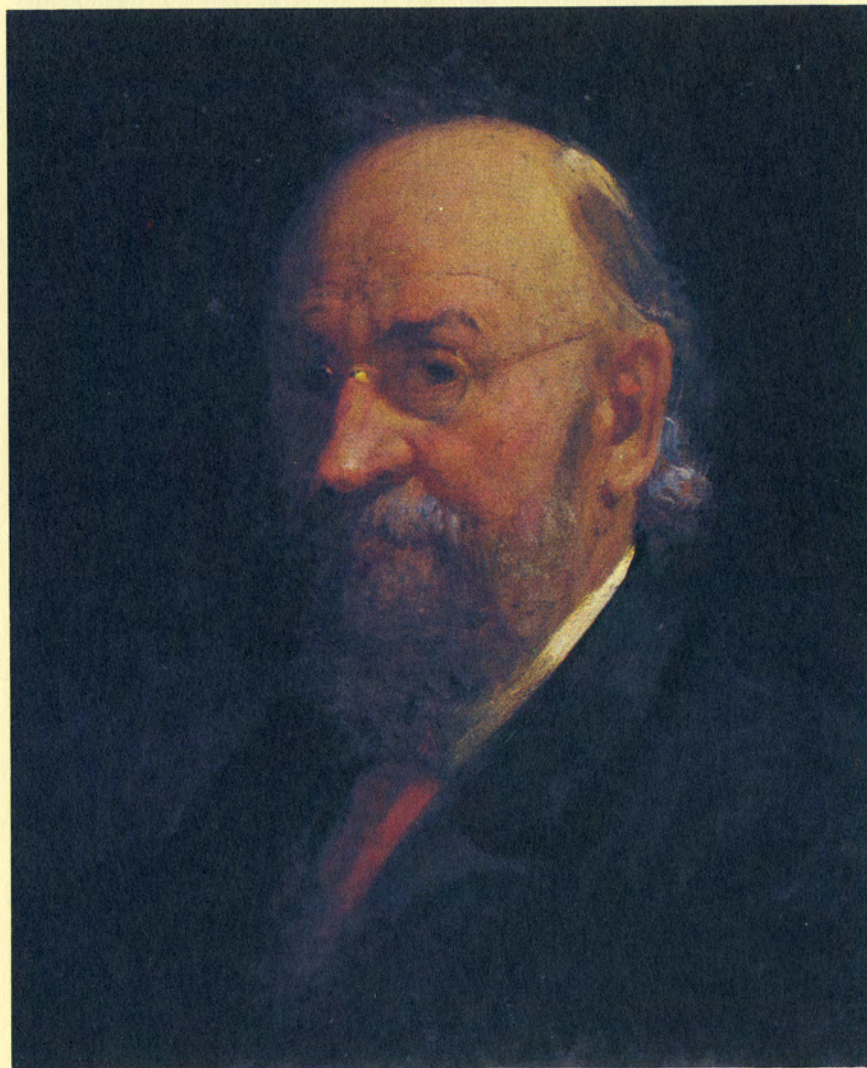


LARS SELLSTEDT HERITAGE

A COMMUNITY TRIBUTE EXHIBITION • SEPTEMBER 18–OCTOBER 15, 1972



SELF PORTRAIT. 1907

CHARLES BURCHFIELD CENTER

Western New York Forum For American Art

STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AT BUFFALO

1300 Elmwood Avenue • Buffalo, New York

COMMUNITY TRIBUTES

Lars Sellstedt Potter, grandson of Lars G. Sellstedt, one of the founders of The Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, was a director of the Academy for 47 years and treasurer for 40 of those years. His wisdom and sound advice helped shape the growth of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery. His untiring efforts and hours of thoughtful service were directed solely to furthering the cultural influence of the Gallery, thus carrying on the interests of his grandfather. It is with deep gratitude that I salute Lars Potter not only for his contribution to the cultural welfare of this community, but for his loyal and understanding friendship.

Gordon M. Smith
Director
Albright-Knox Art Gallery

The Swedish Club of Buffalo takes great pride in congratulating Lars Sellstedt Potter, Frank Hamilton Potter and all descendants of Lars Gustaf Sellstedt, distinguished painter and civic leader in Buffalo 1842 to 1911. We are proud that Lars Sellstedt, the lad from Sweden, made such an enormous contribution to his and our adopted city and country. We are happy to participate in honoring the Lars Sellstedt Heritage by co-hosting the opening reception for the Exhibition as token of Scandinavian pride in our fellow-men.

George Janofsky
President
Swedish Club of Buffalo

CHARLES BURCHFIELD CENTER

The Charles Burchfield Center, Western New York Forum for American Art, located in Rockwell Hall, is devoted to the exhibition of major works of Western New York's world famous water-colorist and aims to develop as a regional center for the study and research of American art.

The Center features continuous exhibitions of significant works by the artist including paintings, drawings and sketches; houses his journals; other writings and publications concerning him. Special exhibitions are presented featuring various collections of his work, the works of selected guest artists, regional groups of artists, or some aspect of American art related to the Western New York area. Paintings and drawings in the permanent Center collection are available for viewing at all times.

The Center's permanent collection is owned by the Buffalo State College

That there is still a going theatre in Buffalo is due largely to the continuing interest and efforts of one man. Buffalo owes much to Lars Potter whose interests have included music and painting as well as theatre. The Studio Arena Theatre would probably not be in existence today had not Lars, as a young man, spent untold energy and talent to keep theatre in some form alive in the community. He was most active, shortly after the first World War, in organizing the Buffalo Players. This group for many years gave Buffalo audiences a high quality of amateur theatre and helped to develop much local talent. In 1927, Lars was largely instrumental in persuading Jane Keeler to forsake her position at State Teachers College and assume the direction of the Studio Theatre School. Through all the succeeding years his unflagged interest, energy and talent helped to build the Studio Theatre School into one of the foremost community theatre organizations in the country. Both Lars and Jane Keeler were instrumental in organizing the theatre as a school as well as a producing organization, and this dual role did much to assure the success of this venture. Shortly after the Theatre moved to its Lafayette plant, Lars Potter's foresight, hard work and leadership were responsible for its obtaining one of the first foundation grants (Rockefeller) to a community theatre. When the Studio Theatre School became the professional Studio Arena Theatre the same dual role of theatre and school was continued. Today, as an honorary member of the Board of Trustees of the Studio Arena Theatre, Lars never fails to attend board meetings and is always ready to share his many years of experience. Buffalo audiences have known Lars as an actor of some ability. The many hundreds who have worked in the theatre know him as a constant source of help and inspiration.

The Studio Theatre School

Alumni Foundation, Inc., a non-profit tax-exempt organization. It is hoped that the Foundation's collection will be increased by gifts and bequests so that several of the major works of Charles E. Burchfield will be made accessible for viewing and study in the artist's home community.

Private gifts and Center memberships are a significant source of support to the Center's exhibition and forum activities. Memberships include free copies of all catalogs and invitations to all program events and exhibition openings. Memberships: Contributing \$25; Sustaining \$15; Regular \$10; Student \$3.

BURCHFIELD CENTER ADVISORY BOARD

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LARS SELLSTEDT HERITAGE

The *Lars Sellstedt Heritage* is one and many things. It is a personal saga, a family birthright, a confraternity of precious friends and a community tradition. In summary, it is a cultural legacy to Western New York.

Lars Gustaf Sellstedt, the American Sellstedt patriarch, was himself only the third Sellstedt generation in Sweden where, in his grandfather's time, surnames were almost non-existent among tillers of the soil.

Born in April 1819, fatherless at 9, he went to sea at age 12 after having been ill-treated beyond endurance by his step-father. Perhaps the observation he made in his autobiography *From Forecastle To Academy* reflects the tone of the man's entire story: "... though I never in my mature life, could see that it was an offense to cut a sapling growing from the root of a mountain ash to make a fish-pole of for a little boy." The little boy that took easily to the adventurous and perilous life at sea seems to have always generously applied natural optimism, enormous intelligence, perceptivity and kindness with sheer determination.

At age 27 he decided to spend his life principally on dry land due to the threat the hazardous shipwork placed on his physical endurance. His choice was to settle in a city of the Great Lakes region where he might still enjoy occasional work "at-sea" and also develop a livelihood on dry land.

When Lars Sellstedt first came to Buffalo in 1842 he started to paint portraits in oil for a hobby while he had nothing else to do. His respect for the tenets of the Christian Church prevented him from working on Sunday and it was just about impossible for him to get ahead with his painting without doing so. He sailed in Fall anyway so it was not until the Lakes were frozen in the winter that he painted in earnest — to earn money to help "mama," working almost night and day to learn the technique. Within the next year or so, because his life was seriously endangered by overly hard work at sea, he began thinking of nothing else but painting, knowing that if he were skillful, he would soon make a success. After a succession of hazardous adventures aimed at making money to enable him to both visit Sweden to see beloved "mama" and to send her money, he was forced to decide never to go to sea again and to devote himself solely to painting. By October 1846, Lars Sellstedt wrote: "I am now considered the best painter in the city and for 300 miles around, and it is beginning to look as if I am coming along fairly well." The following year, nevertheless, he concentrated upon self-improvement by attending a lecture course at the Buffalo Medical School (present SUNY School of Medicine) which resulted in his making anatomical dissections and drawings.

Manifestations of the warmth and devotion Lars Sellstedt held for his mother are present also in his concern for his wife, children and friends — the beautiful Louise Lovejoy, the bride who died of cholera; Caroline Scott, the "lovely and cultivated young lady" who became his second wife and mother of the precocious, fair-haired "Willie" (tenderly laid to rest at age 11) and of Eva who was destined to become mother of Lars Sellstedt Potter and Frank Hamilton Potter; and the host of friends in Buffalo's best social circles and cultural endeavors to which his second marriage introduced him and out of which associations grew the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy (with the Albright Art Gallery edifice) and the Studio Club, later the Studio Theatre School.

On the occasion of the Centennial of the founding of the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy in 1962, a *Lars Gustaf Sellstedt* Exhibition was held at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery. Commenting on that exhibition and three of Sellstedt's contemporaries (Wilgus, LeClear and Beard), Chase Viele wrote in *New York History*, Quarterly Journal of the New York Historical Association, January 1962:

"The important contribution of all four to nineteenth century American Romantic painting should be acknowledged with grateful tribute. Their training ground in pre-Civil War Buffalo, when these artists, each struggling for a living, were in intimate association with each other, gives Buffalo's art world of the period a special significance.

"Painting, practically unknown in Buffalo in the thirties, by the fifties

found increasingly widespread patronage among the elite of the city. Portraiture was, of course, the principal livelihood of Buffalo's artists of the period. Although several lesser artists were active in the city, the names of Wilgus, LeClear, Beard, and to a slighter degree, Sellstedt, are known today in the annals of American Art as painters who, each in his own way, made noteworthy contributions to what is now known as American Romantic Painting. Sellstedt's own volume on *Art in Buffalo* provides a vivid insight into the artistic life of the period."

At the time of Sellstedt's death, June 1911 at age 92, the *Buffalo-Express* noted: "He was a loyal citizen of Buffalo for over half a century, and did more than any other man to encourage among Buffalo's rising generation the study of art."

But the *Lars Sellstedt Heritage* does not end here. To the patriarch's long and capable service, crowned by his election as honorary president of *The Buffalo Fine Arts Academy*, are to be added the equally long and capable services of his distinguished grandson, Lars Sellstedt Potter. Honored by citations from the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, the Studio Theatre School, The Nichols School and his business associates, Lars Sellstedt Potter is credited with an amazing record of accomplishments that are also destined "to encourage among Buffalo's rising generation the study of art." Over fifty years of service to our Fine Arts Academy, Theatre School and renowned independent school; each service having already been noted for high quality and distinction by the respective institutions, is of itself, noteworthy! Recognition of the fact that Lars Sellstedt Potter, upon the premature death of his father Dr. Frank Hamilton Potter, came with his mother and brother to live in the home of his grandparents at 78 W. Mohawk Street (present site of the Hotel Statler), emphasizes the inter-relatedness of the personal, community, cultural efforts of grandfather and grandson. Together they span 1842-1972, 130 years service to our community. No one can estimate the dimensions of this heritage. We are happy to include a painting by Lars Sellstedt Potter III, art student at the University of Denver and grandson of Lars Sellstedt Potter, as evidence of third and fourth generation potential continuation. Janet Crawford Potter, Lars' wife, former Headmistress of the Franklin and Elmwood Franklin School and a Professor of Speech at the University of Buffalo for 25 years, has made her own excellent contribution to the Studio Theatre School and in supporting her husband in his various activities. The countless members of our community who have directly and indirectly enjoyed the actual work and/or cultural services of the Sellstedt family may even be unaware of the Sellstedt/Potter names, the heritage — the cultural legacy — nonetheless enriches their lives.

The countless Sellstedt friends, including the students who are yet to come to know Lars Sellstedt Potter through the Burchfield Center Forum programs accompanying this Exhibition will, like Millard Fillmore and Grover Cleveland, inevitably be touched by the vibrant enthusiasm and deep humility of grandfather and/or grandson.

In concluding the Introduction to the 1962 Sellstedt Exhibition Catalog, Walter McCausland made a summary appropriate also to this *Lars Sellstedt Heritage* exhibition ten years later. McCausland put it this way:

"In modest self-appraisal, Sellstedt ended his own story of his long and adventurous life with these words: 'I love to think that I might have been a better painter had I had the early training needed to become one. Ambition I had, high standard was mine, too high, perhaps, for my limited powers. In one thing, however, I have not failed, I have not failed in my loyalty to the pure, the good, the beautiful in art.'"

It is appropriate that the *Lars Sellstedt Heritage* Exhibition is offered as a Community Tribute to Lars Gustaf Sellstedt, Lars Sellstedt Potter and their families who have upheld them in their loyalty and devotion leaving us both the tangible and intangible heritage encouraging the study of art in our times.

Edna M. Lindemann
Director/Curator

LARS GUSTAF SELLSTEDT PAINTINGS

We are deeply indebted to each lender whose name is listed with the work(s) loaned for this Sellstedt Heritage Exhibition and whose assistance has made this Community Tribute possible.

All works are oil on canvas unless otherwise noted. Sizes are given in inches, vertical x horizontal.

- 1 SHIPWRECK
1849, 19½ x 32
Frank Hamilton Potter
- 2 CONJECKETY, AGED 106
1850, 27 x 22 Oval
Albright-Knox Art Gallery
- 3 PORTRAIT OF A GIRL
1852, 48 x 36
Dorothy Klein Antiques
- 4 A. T. CHESTER, D.D.
1853, 49⁵/₈ x 28¹/₈
Albright-Knox Art Gallery
- 5 MY MOTHER (Mrs. Eva Sellstedt)
1854, 18 x 14½
Frank Hamilton Potter
- 6 SILAS HUBBARD, M.D.
1854-55, 24 x 20
Mrs. Walter B. Robb
- 7 EVENING SCENE
1855, 36½ Diameter
Oil on Copper
Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society
- 8 RIVER SCENE
1855, 36½ Diameter
Oil on Copper
Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society
- 9 MY WIFE (Caroline Scott)
1856, 24¼ x 20
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 10 WILLIAM K. SCOTT, M.D.
1856, 24 x 20
Lars Sellstedt Potter

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are indebted to Lars and Janet Potter for their enthusiastic and patient assistance in researching the Lars Sellstedt Heritage; to the numerous individuals, organizations and public institutions who have generously lent works to the Exhibition, to the late Walter McCausland and to Chase Viele, art historians, for their research on Sellstedt and his contemporaries; to Dr. D. Kenneth Winebrenner for his assistance with this brochure; to Peter A. Vogt, for his generous contribution in printing the exhibition brochure; and to Susan Poth, student at Buffalo State University College, for her study of Sellstedt and his works and assistance in all aspects of the Exhibition.

- 11 GOVENOR BLACKSNAKE
1857, 22 x 18
Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society
- 12 SOLOMON G. HAVEN
1861, 27 x 22
Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society
- 13 EVA SELLSTEDT — AGE 3
1865, 16 x 20
Frank Hamilton Potter
- 14 THE RABBI
1867, 25 x 20¾
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 15 NIAGARA RIVER. (L.G.S. Fishing)
1869, 16½ x 24
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 16 BUFFALO HARBOR FROM THE FOOT
OF PORTER AVENUE
1871, 18 x 30
Albright-Knox Art Gallery
- 17 MR. SELLSTEDT IN HIS STUDIO
1871, 54 x 42¼
Albright-Knox Art Gallery
- 18 FRIGATE BY MOONLIGHT
1873, 20½ x 32
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 19 MAJOR GENERAL PETER B. PORTER
1873, 24 x 20
Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society
- 20 MRS. ALBERT TRACY
1874, 30 x 25¼
Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society
- 21 FROM MY WINDOW IN VENICE
1875, 16½ x 30
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 22 A WINTER'S DAY AT MARBLEHEAD
1875, 11½ x 24
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 23 SELF-PORTRAIT
1875, 16½ x 15½
Peter A. Vogt
- 24 MAYOR E. G. SPAULDING
1876, 35 x 28
The City of Buffalo
- 25 SAILING SHIP OFF OF
SUNDSVALL, SWEDEN
1877, 18 x 14
Chase Viele
- 26 WILLIAM W. POTTER, M.D.
1888, 24¼ x 20
Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society
- 27 A STORM OFF BERMUDA
1890, 19 x 30
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 28 BERMUDA PORTRAIT
1897, 10¼ x 7¾
Water Color
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 29 SUNSET
1898, 15¼ x 27
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 30 SELF-PORTRAIT
1899, 30¼ x 25
Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society
- 31 FRANK HAMILTON POTTER, M.D.
1899, 16¼ x 20½
Frank Hamilton Potter
- 32 VENICE SCENE
1905, 7½ x 12½
Peter A. Vogt
- 33 ANCIENT MARINER
1907, 34 x 27
Daniel I. Larkin
- 34 SELF-PORTRAIT — Cover
1907, 17¼ x 14
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 35 SELF-PORTRAIT
1907, 14 x 11
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- UNDATED**
- 36 A SAILING SHIP
26½ x 36
Mrs. Walter B. Robb
- 37 BUFFALO BOY COUNTING HIS MONEY
18¾ x 12
Nelson G. Russell, Jr. M.D.
- 38 GROVER CLEVELAND
40¼ x 32½
The Buffalo Club
- 39 GEORGE W. CLINTON
40 x 32
Buffalo Museum of Science
- 40 MRS. MILLARD FILLMORE (Caroline)
24 x 20
Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society
- 41 MILLARD FILLMORE
40 x 32
The Buffalo Club
- 42 GONDOLAS, VENICE
14¼ x 27
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 43 MRS. JOHN GRAVES
19¼ x 23½
Mr. John G. Putnam
- 44 NATHAN K. HALL
27½ x 22
Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society
- 45 ANN HANCE,
WIFE OF JOSIAH LETCHWORTH
17¼ x 21¾
Mrs. Geoffrey J. Letchworth
- 46 GEORGE E. HAYES, M.D.
39½ x 31½
Buffalo Museum of Science
- 47 MRS. JOHN LARKIN, SR.
18 x 14
Mrs. Harry Larkin, Sr.
- 48 THOMAS LE CLEAR
24½ x 20¼
Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society
- 49 JAMES MILLER
24 x 20
Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society
- 50 MRS. FANNIE PLATT
8½ x 7¾
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 51 SAILBOATS (Marblehead)
7¼ x 11
Mrs. Walter McCausland
- 52 SEA CAPTAIN
22 x 26½
Nelson G. Russell, Jr., M.D.
- 53 SEASCAPE
17¼ x 27¼
Frank Hamilton Potter
- 54 EVA SELLSTEDT IN ITALY
11 x 8½
Oil on Wood
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 55 SHIP IN STORM
12¼ x 16
Lars Sellstedt Potter
- PAINTINGS BY OTHER ARTISTS**
- JANET CRAWFORD POTTER
(Mrs. Lars S. Potter)
- 56 LOOSESTRIFE
1968, 15 x 23½
Lent by Lars Sellstedt Potter
- LARS SELLSTEDT POTTER III
- 57 FORT NIAGARA
1965, 30 x 21
(Painted at Age 15)
Lent by Lars Sellstedt Potter
- 58 UNTITLED
1971, 18 x 12
Lent by Lars Sellstedt Potter