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Ella Baché Brummer

Donations for the Purpose of Teaching*



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A significant name in the formation of American museums and collections belongs to a Hungarian-Jewish family: the Brummers. Together, three brothers—Joseph, Ernest, and Imre—defied the odds of their upbringing in a remote corner of the Habsburg Empire and became successful art dealers with galleries in New York and Paris.¹ However, it was Ella Baché Brummer—independent business owner, art donor, and widow of Ernest Brummer—who spent nearly four decades spreading the Brummer collection and archival materials to sites across the world, immortalizing the family’s name and legacy in the process (Fig. 1). She continued a multitude of strong relationships forged by the brothers with public and academic institutions while also cultivating her own friendships and partnerships with museums and universities, including the Museum of Art and Archaeology (MAA) at the University of Missouri.²



Fig. 1. Ella Baché Brummer in her New York apartment, ca. 1990s. “Personal Photographs: Ernest and Ella Bache Brummer.” Brummer Gallery Records, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Cloisters Library and Archives, New York. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiif/p16028coll9/65502/full/full/0/default.jpg>.

Her relationship with the Museum is an illustration, although minor, of how Saul and Gladys Weinberg founded the Museum and built the collections (Fig. 2). The University of Missouri’s 1955 excavation on Cyprus was the impetus for the establishment of the Museum in 1957.³ At that time, Cyprus allowed foreign excavations to acquire a share of the excavation finds. The University received three magnificent tomb groups consisting of about 39 objects (Fig. 3). The vases were first exhibited in cases in Jesse

*I would like to express my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the individuals who supported my research on Ella Baché Brummer and the Brummer collections for my thesis and article: my co-advisors Anne Rudloff Stanton and Michael Yonan, committee member Lois L. Huneycutt, Michael Carter of the Cloisters Library and Archives, and Ella Brummer’s nephew and great-niece John Laszlo and Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi. My gratitude also goes to Cathy Callaway for her grace and patience, Vibeke Olson and Scott Juall of UNCW, Jane Biers and my anonymous peer reviewer for their helpful comments.

1. Some of the brothers’ clients included well-known figures such as William Randolph Hearst and John D. Rockefeller.

2. Existing relationships included the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Cleveland Museum of Art, Harvard Art Museums, and the (now) Walters Art Museum.

3. Weinberg 1956. For redating of the tomb groups, see Herscher 1981 p. 80.



Fig. 2. Gladys and Saul S. Weinberg.

Hall, the campus administration building, and generated much publicity, including Saul Weinberg's appearance on a local television station (Fig. 4). As a result, the Weinbergs began to think seriously about collecting ancient Greek objects as a study collection for students. They then began to work on founding a museum.⁴ For advice, the Weinbergs first consulted Dietrich von Bothmer, curator of ancient art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He advised them to contact the dealer Joseph Carlebach, who became a good friend and who introduced them to several collectors of art. Because Saul and Gladys were such interesting and charming people, they soon became fast friends with several wealthy collectors, who were mostly based in New York. Every year in the fall the Weinbergs would travel to New York to visit these

people. As a result of these connections, collectors would make annual donations of art objects to the Museum. Most of the non-Western collections in the Museum were obtained through gifts of this kind from these wealthy donors who had no connection with the University of Missouri. Ella Brummer's friendship with the Weinbergs provides an example of how the Weinbergs were able to build the collections despite working with a small budget from the University.



Fig. 3. Cypriot vases on display. Original photo from *Muse 10* (1976) p. 6.



Fig. 4. Saul S. Weinberg on television.

⁴ For more information about the history of the Museum of Art and Archaeology, see "The Museum of Art and Archaeology: A Brief History" following this article.

Life of Ella Brummer

Ella Brummer (née Laszlo) is generally overshadowed in discussions of the Brummer Gallery by the success of her husband, Ernest, and his brothers. In truth, she was a vital and active participant in their colorful familial history, and one who should be celebrated for her own accomplishments. Born to Jewish parents Philipp and Gisela Laszlo (née Fisman) on November 17, 1900, Ella Brummer was raised in Beregszasz, Hungary. She wished to study medicine like her brother Dr. Daniel Laszlo, but as a woman, Brummer was not allowed to attend medical school.⁵

Instead, she studied at the University of Budapest and at the age of twenty-six became the first woman to graduate there as a pharmacist.⁶ She eventually went on to successfully create her own brand of science-based skincare products. Today it is one of the oldest family-owned skincare brands in the world, and Australia's largest beauty-franchise business.⁷ After a brief and unhappy arranged marriage with an older Hungarian banker by the name of Bacher, she moved to Paris. Working in French (her third language), she served as a consultant to a top skincare company before starting her own under a modification of her then-married name, Ella Baché. Sometime around 1941, Brummer was forced to leave Paris and temporarily abandon her business to escape Nazi occupation. She traveled to the south of France where she remained until her brother could obtain a visa for her entry to the United States. According to Brummer's great-niece Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi, she was only able to obtain a visa because she had patents in the United States. Her quick thinking and patience prevailed, and she left Europe on the last ship out of Lisbon, Portugal in 1942. Despite her successful escape to the United States, nearly all Brummer's family was slaughtered in the Holocaust, including her mother for whom she had frantically tried to help obtain a visa, to no avail.⁸

According to her nephew Dr. John Laszlo, Ella unknowingly met her future husband the day after she arrived in the United States. Her brother only knew of her arrival at the last minute and had previously scheduled dinner with a patient of his. His guest suggested that rather than cancel dinner he could bring his sister. That guest was Ernest Brummer (Fig. 5). Her nephew describes their courtship as slow: the couple lived together, unmarried, for eight years in a studio apartment in Manhattan. The eight-

⁵ According to Brummer's great-niece Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi, Brummer's father, Philipp Laszlo, a banker, was born in Kajaszoszentpeter, Hungary. Her mother, Gisela Fisman Laszlo, was born in Galocs, Hungary. Dr. Daniel Laszlo and his second wife, Dr. Herta Spencer-Laszlo, founded the world's first laboratory dedicated to the study of metabolism in humans. Email correspondence from Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi to the author, May 6, 2018.

⁶ Laszlo 2017. Dr. Daniel Laszlo's son and only child, Dr. John Laszlo, is the nephew of Mrs. Ella Brummer and gave a poignant talk on his personal memories of Ella and Ernest Brummer at a two-day symposium in New York.

⁷ Ella Baché is led by CEO Pippa Hallas, Ella Brummer's great-niece, in Australia. Email correspondence from Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi to the author, May 6, 2018.

⁸ The family's collection of letters and cables from Ella indicate that she had tried to help her mother escape while working to obtain her own visa but was unsuccessful. The only surviving members of Ella Brummer's family were her brother, Daniel Laszlo, who left Europe because he was the doctor to an ambassador; her cousin George Hallas who was unable to obtain a visa to the United States and instead went to Australia; and another cousin who escaped to South Africa. Despite the family being very successful and connected throughout Budapest and Vienna, the rest of her family were slaughtered. Email correspondence from Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi to the author, May 6, 2018.



Fig. 5. Ernest Brummer in his office in New York in 1956.

bedroom apartment that served as the Brummer Gallery was in the same building. Every morning she walked to work on Fifty-fifth Street, where she had established another laboratory for her cosmetics company, and Ernest took the elevator down to the Gallery. The pair still split their time between New York and Europe, traveling each April on the *Queen Mary* so she could continue her work in Paris. Eight months out of the year, they lived in Manhattan so Ernest could run the Gallery. The other three months Ella spent in Paris, living above her flagship store at 8 rue de la Paix. During their long sea voyages, Ernest was invited to sit at the captain's table but, since the pair were not married,

she was not invited to join. According to her nephew, "this proved to be intolerable to Ella," and is believed to be the reason they married.⁹

Ella Brummer was quite social and had many friends, while Ernest had few. She is remembered as outgoing, generous, and kind but was also tough minded when running her business. Her employees respected her for her knowledge and fairness, though it is said that "she could cuss in good French when necessary, and Hungarian when circumstances demanded it."¹⁰

The couple conversed in English and French, but reverted to Hungarian during arguments. Ernest was a chain-smoker, which led to health issues at the end of his life. He suffered from congestive heart failure and chronic bronchitis and died on February 21, 1964, from complications related to smoking. On his aunt and uncle, Dr. John Laszlo comments: "Ella and Ernest, each of them, would deserve a *Reader's Digest* article of the most unforgettable character I've met."¹¹ There is no doubt that Brummer often observed her husband in his Gallery, and it is possible that she became familiar with some of his methods, despite keeping their businesses separate throughout their marriage.

After her husband's death, Brummer suffered extreme grief. Ernest's death was publicized in many newspapers, each remarking on the loss of an important gallery owner. Brummer received many letters of condolence from his friends and peers, each of which exemplifies the impact Ernest and his brothers had on individuals and institutions alike.

⁹. Laszlo 2017.

¹⁰. Laszlo 2017.

¹¹. Laszlo 2017.

The weight of his death is clear in Brummer's letters, as they represent the broad network of contacts he maintained through his life. These letters are also significant because they mark the beginning of the next three decades of Brummer's life without her husband. In 1973, nearly ten years after his death, she decided to leave Manhattan for Durham, North Carolina, where her nephew and his family lived. She moved her husband's collection with her to her home in Durham, where she paid a live-in graduate student to help take care of her. After five years, Brummer decided to return to New York and resume her business from which she had never really retired, though the collection remained in Durham.¹²

Life After Ernest

Between Ernest's death in 1964 and her own death in 1999, Brummer worked tirelessly to run her own company and to preserve the legacy of her husband and his brothers simultaneously. It is important to emphasize that, prior to her husband's death, Ella Brummer had no role in his Gallery and the pair kept their businesses financially separate throughout their marriage. Ernest's death represents a transformative time in Brummer's professional life, in which she became the sole facilitator of the remainder of the Brummer collection and the new point of contact for her late husband's vast network. Shortly after his death, Brummer began to work through her grief and took over the serious management of the family's remaining collection. She started to represent her late husband and responded to requests from previous clients, museums, and others. Through the continuation of Ernest and his brothers' previous professional relationships, Brummer found opportunities to build her own professional network and personal friendships with curators, their spouses and families, and with the institutions at which they worked. This led to decades of communication between Ella Brummer and several auction houses, museums, and universities, including the University of Missouri.¹³ Brummer also opened her home to the curators with whom she had become familiar so that they could see her husband's collection and discuss possible gifts and sales.

One prestigious institution with which the Brummers' professional lives were intertwined was the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a relationship that began in 1914 when Ernest's brothers immigrated to the United States and continued with Ella Brummer.¹⁴ One letter Brummer received following her husband's death, dated February 23, 1964, came from James J. Rorimer, then-director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In it, he not only offers his condolences to Brummer for the death of her husband but also desperately suggests that she not lose the archival material the family amassed and maintained throughout their Gallery's history:

If you decide to give the books and documents to our archival institution, they could become so useful. I would like to advise you, [sic] they must not be

¹² Lazlo 2017.

¹³ Ella Brummer frequently communicated with John D. Cooney and William Wixom of the Cleveland Museum of Art and Cornelius Vermeule and Hanns Swarzenski of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Brummer's friendships extended to the wives and families of the curators, which can be traced through various letters and cards sent between the parties. "Gifts and Sales to Other Museums, 1964-89." Brummer Gallery Records.

¹⁴ Forsyth 1974. The Metropolitan Museum of Art acquired over four hundred objects from the brothers.

lost. You will remember that Ernest Brummer and I were very close friends—he meant much to me and his brothers helped us carry out the great sales and made us [illegible] gifts. We [talked] about all this even before [Joseph Brummer’s] services—so I do not hesitate even now to mention this matter to you.¹⁵

Rorimer lived near the Brummer Gallery in New York City and knew the brothers well, often spending hours studying just one object with Joseph.¹⁶ Unfortunately, Rorimer died in 1966 before Ella Brummer could accept his advice. His urgent plea stayed with her until April 1980, when she officially donated the Brummer Gallery Records to the Met.¹⁷ Her donation of these records continues to aid scholars in their research and allows auction houses and museums, including the MAA, to fill gaps in object provenance.

Brummer’s own professional relationships with museums and their staff blossomed in the years following Ernest’s death. She maintained his partnerships with the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Cleveland Museum of Art, among others. The brothers had also maintained professional relationships with other universities throughout the northeast United States, particularly between the 1920s and 1940s.¹⁸ Brummer, however, seemed particularly interested in cultivating her own new relationships with universities and their museums, including Duke University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Tufts University, and the University of Missouri. She donated, loaned, and sold a plethora of objects from her husband’s collection over a span of many years to these institutions. Although many of the universities with which Ella Brummer was associated had not previously been connected to her husband or his brothers, in 1971, for example, the Museum of Art and Archaeology had purchased a rock crystal vase formerly in the Brummer collection (Fig. 6).¹⁹



Fig. 6. Amphoriskos, 1st century, rock crystal in modern gold mount, H: 9.40 cm. University of Missouri, Museum of Art and Archaeology (71.126) Museum purchase.

¹⁵ Correspondence from James J. Rorimer to Ella Brummer, February 23, 1964 “Ella Baché Brummer, Metropolitan Museum correspondence, 1964–1990.” Brummer Gallery Records. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiii/f/p16028coll9/67426/full/full/0/default.jpg>

¹⁶ Brennan 2017.

¹⁷ Another donation came to the Met in 2016, when John Laszlo donated Ella Brummer’s records and correspondence.

¹⁸ See Cahn 1969 pp. 53–68; Gillerman 1981 pp. 34–36.

¹⁹ Acc. no. 71.126. H. 9.4 cm. See Oliver 1973 pp. 31–32. Museum purchase. Sale cat. *Christie, Manson and Woods*, 29–30 June 29–30, 1898 (Alfred Morrison coll.) lot 289; sale cat. *Christie, Manson and Woods*, April 19, 1921 (J. P. Heseltine coll.) lot 160; sale cat. *Parke-Bernet* May 11–14, 1949 (Joseph Brummer coll.) lot 152, ill. p. 38, where it is also said to have been in the collection of R.W.M. Walker, London, 1945; sale cat. *Parke-Bernet* Dec. 5, 1969 (Melvin Gutman coll.) lot 145, ill.; sale cat. *Parke-Bernet* Nov. 5, 1971, lot 182 pl. 24. It is also illustrated in the *Allen Memorial Art Museum Bulletin* 18 (1960) p. 257 no. 163.

Ella Brummer's motivation for connecting with academic institutions like the University of Missouri can be highlighted by her significant contributions to Duke University in particular.²⁰ In 1966, Brummer sold about 280 objects, mostly medieval, valued "undoubtedly appreciably in excess of \$1.2 million" to Duke University, where she developed an extensive network with the faculty and administrators before her move to Durham in the early 1970s.²¹ Brummer explicitly stated her reason behind this major sale to Duke University in a hastily typed draft on a piece of Brummer Gallery stationary in 1966:

I am choosing the University because I want that the collection serves a teaching purpose. It should be shown as a whole together in one building, [the] pieces well exposed that students can see them well and learn from them. We have to specify that these objects should not be placed as decorative pieces here and there in a church or library or left because lack of space in a basement, where they cannot be seen correctly and serve for study.²²

The Museum of Art and Archaeology would later benefit from Brummer's affinity toward university museums and the learning and research opportunities that her husband's objects could provide to generations of students.

Ella Brummer and the Museum of Art and Archaeology

Between 1979 and 1984, Ella Brummer donated five objects in three separate gifts to the Museum. Weinberg's address card was included in Brummer's rolodex in the Brummer Gallery Records and gives some insight into their acquaintance (Fig. 7). The handwritten card includes his position at the University of Missouri, states that Weinberg "[gave] a lecture on his excavating in [Elateia] Palestine" in Durham, North Carolina, on April 2, 1975, and that he was a "very good man."²³ The card also includes a vital

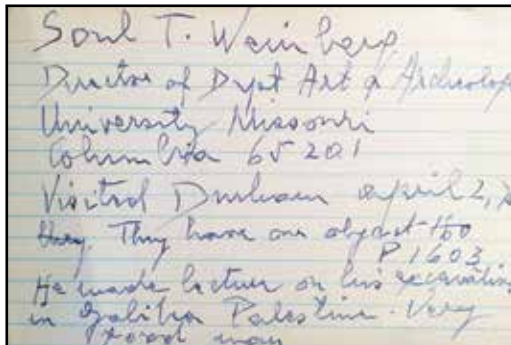


Fig. 7. Ella Brummer's address card for Saul Weinberg. Brummer Gallery Records, Cloisters Library and Archives, New York.

²⁰ Brummer's nephew John Laszlo was Professor of Medicine at Duke University and Director of Clinical Programs at Duke Comprehensive Cancer Center. The Brummer Gallery Records indicate that Ella Brummer shared a long and close friendship with her nephew's fellow faculty member Dr. James Semans and especially with his wife, Mary Duke Bittle Semans, a descendant of the family that founded Duke University. Brummer also became close with Duke University president, Douglas M. Knight, who was the catalyst in carrying out her sales and gifts to Duke. "Mary Semans, Champion of Duke and Durham, Dies," *Duke Today*, <https://today.duke.edu/2012/01/marysemans>. See also Bruzelius and Meredith 1991.

²¹ Correspondence from Abraham J. Brillhoff to Duke president Douglas Knight, December 14, 1965. "Ella Baché Brummer, Duke University, 1966 Sale and Gift Contract." Brummer Gallery Records.

²² "Ella Baché Brummer, Duke University, 1966 Sale and Gift Contract." Brummer Gallery Records.

²³ The site of Elateia is in Greece, not Palestine; the middle initial should be "S."

piece of information: “They have one object, P1603.” It is most likely that the friendly Brummer met Weinberg for the first time after he gave this lecture, approached him to talk, learned that the MAA owned an object that had once belonged in her husband’s gallery, and invited him to her home in Durham to see other objects from Ernest’s collection.²⁴ Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi suggests that Brummer may have been quickly comfortable with Weinberg because they were both Jewish, and that it was easier for Brummer to trust those of her same faith after her traumatic experiences during and after the Holocaust.²⁵ Brummer’s connection to the MAA through Weinberg was only strengthened by the fact that the MAA already owned one of her husband’s objects.

Shortly after Weinberg’s visit to Durham, Brummer wrote to Weinberg to offer information on the object’s provenance. The first documentation of the MAA in the Brummer Gallery Records is a letter dated April 7, 1975, from Weinberg to Brummer in response to this note from Brummer regarding the rock crystal amphoriskos (Fig. 6, page 51) in the Museum’s existing collection.²⁶ Weinberg writes: “Your very thoughtful note on the crystal amphora arrived this morning and I hasten to send my thanks for it. I had checked already with our files and found that the Brummer sale was noted.” The sale mentioned here references the 1949 auction of the Joseph Brummer collection at Parke-Bernet Galleries after his death.²⁷ At the time of Ernest’s death in 1964, the Brummer collection was considered by some as “the most valuable collection of classical, medieval, and Renaissance art in American private hands.”²⁸

One of the only other mentions of Weinberg in the Brummer Gallery Records is found in a letter to her dated April 6, 1975, from John Cooney, then curator of Ancient Art at the Cleveland Museum and a close friend of Ella Brummer. Cooney wrote in reference to her move from Manhattan to Durham and notes her meeting Weinberg: “A recent visit from my old friend Saul Weinberg brought me some news of you.”²⁹ It is also possible that Weinberg’s connection to Cooney convinced Brummer to move forward with her professional relationship with the MAA.³⁰ Apart from her apparent connection to Weinberg, Brummer also would have been reacquainted with the MAA through her participation in the 1976 exhibition *Small Sculptures in Bronze from the Classical World*, at

²⁴ Weinberg writes: “It was a great pleasure to meet you and a joy to see the wonderful things which you have in your home. Mrs. Weinberg was most envious when she heard of my visit and I hope there will be an opportunity to have her meet you as well. All my thanks for your very generous hospitality.” Correspondence from Weinberg to Brummer, April 7, 1975. “Ella Baché Brummer, Gifts and Sales to Other Museums, 1964–89.” Brummer Gallery Records. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiif/p16028coll9/66801/full/full/0/default.jpg>.

²⁵ Email correspondence from Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi to the author, May 6, 2018.

²⁶ Correspondence from Weinberg to Brummer, April 7, 1975.

²⁷ Parke-Bernet Galleries, *The Notable Art Collection Belonging to the Estate of the Late Joseph Brummer*, lot 152 p. 38.

²⁸ “Gold Statuette Stolen from London Display,” *Post-Crescent* (Appleton, WI), Sunday, September 23, 1979.

²⁹ Correspondence from John D. Cooney to Ella Brummer, April 6, 1975. “Gifts and Sales to Other Museums, 1964–89.” Brummer Gallery Records. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiif/p16028coll9/67670/full/full/0/default.jpg>.

³⁰ Weinberg and Brummer were also both associated with the Israel Museum. See “Greek and Roman Sculpture, Selected Pieces from the Brummer Collection, The Israel Museum.” Brummer Gallery Records.

the Ackland Museum at the University of North Carolina. Both Brummer and the MAA loaned ancient objects for this exhibition.³¹

Brummer's Gifts to the MAA, 1979–1984

In 1979, 1982, and 1984 Ella Brummer gave the MAA objects that furthered the existing Classical and European areas of the collection. Each object was included in the 1979 sale of her husband's collection at Galerie Köller in Switzerland but failed to sell at auction. Her first gift, for which the then acting director Edzard Baumann wrote to thank her, consisted of three ancient objects acquired by the Museum on December 21, 1979.³² The first is a Greek marble grave lekythos with figures in low relief, dated to the mid-fourth century BCE (79.143; Fig. 8). Carved into the marble is a scene depicting a seated woman on the right who faces another woman holding an infant toward her. The foot and everything above the shoulder of the lekythos are missing. Christoph Clairmont suggests that this scene represents a woman who has died during childbirth and that another will take care of her infant.³³ The original object card of the Brummer Gallery Records lists the vessel as a "marble loutrophore without neck" and is given the number P3572 (Fig. 9).³⁴ The back of the Brummer card offers some provenance information for the object, which simply states, "Bought from Roussos." This can possibly be identified as Nicholas Roussos, who opened an antique firm in 1908 in Constantinople and was one of the founders of the Hellenic Association of Antiquarians and Art Dealers.³⁵ Approximately 140 object cards in the Brummer Gallery Records are associated with objects purchased from Roussos of which many, if not all, were Greek or Roman objects. The object card also indicates that this lekythos was purchased with another object, Brummer number P3571 for a sum of seventeen thousand francs.³⁶

The second object included in Brummer's 1979 gift is also a Greek grave marble lekythos with figures in low relief, dated to the second quarter of the fourth century BCE (79.144; Fig. 10). It stands at a height of fifty-one centimeters and is also missing its tall, slim neck and mouth. The exterior of the vessel shows a carving of a family group. To the right, a father stands and faces his wife while a maid stands between them. The figures have been identified by their inscriptions as Timophon, Kleippe, and Lysistrate. Christoph Clairmont suggests that this lekythos was made by the same hand as another now in the Cleveland Museum of Art (1925.1342) that depicts the same characters.³⁷ The original

³¹ Sams 1976.

³² Correspondence from Edzard Baumann to Ella Brummer, February 7, 1980. "Gifts and Sales to Other Museums, 1964–1989" Brummer Gallery Records. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiif/p16028coll9/66904/full/full/0/default.jpg>.

³³ Clairmont 1993 Vol. II pp. 689–690 no. 2.783.

³⁴ P3572: Late Greek marble loutrophore without neck, representing a seated figure facing a standing woman holding a child. Brummer Gallery Records. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiif/p16028coll9/62582/full/full/0/default.jpg>.

³⁵ <http://www.hada.gr/en/members/roussos-antiques/>

³⁶ P3571: Late Greek Marble loutrophore with long neck representing a boy in profile surrounded with circle and preceded by warrior in profile. Brummer Gallery Records. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiif/p16028coll9/63273/full/full/0/default.jpg>.

³⁷ Clairmont 1993 Vol. III pp. 455–456 no. 3.746.



Fig. 8. Greek Grave Lekythos with Figures in Low Relief, mid-4th century BCE, Pentelic of Hymettan marble, H: 51.00 cm, University of Missouri, Museum of Art and Archaeology (79.143) gift of Mrs. Ella Brummer.



Fig. 10. Greek Grave Lekythos with Figures in Low Relief, second quarter of the 4th century BCE, Pentelic marble, H: 50.00 cm, University of Missouri, Museum of Art and Archaeology (79.144) gift of Ella Brummer.

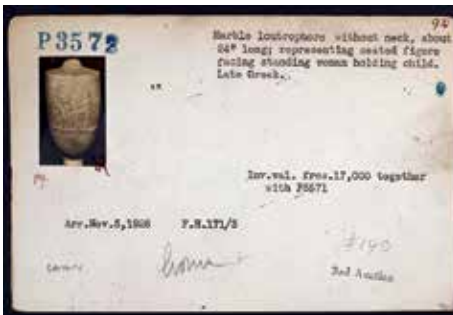


Fig. 9. Brummer object card P3572 for Missouri Lekythos 79.143. Brummer Gallery Records, Cloisters Library and Archives, New York. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiif/p16028coll9/62582/full/full/0/default.jpg>.



Fig. 11. Brummer object card P2534 for Missouri Lekythos 79.144. Brummer Gallery Records, Cloisters Library and Archives, New York. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiif/p16028coll9/62680/full/full/0/default.jpg>.

object card for this lekythos, number P2534, indicates that the Brummers purchased it from someone named “Zoumpoulakis” (Fig. 11).³⁸ It is apparent that the Brummers did a lot of business with “Zoumpoulakis”; however, they seem to have spelled his name wrong on nearly every occasion. It is most likely that the Brummers purchased it in 1926 from a man named Theodoros Zoumboulakis, who opened an antiquities shop in Athens, Greece, in 1912.³⁹ The Brummers purchased it with two other objects, P2534 and P2535, for a sum of fifteen thousand francs. While in the possession of the Brummer Gallery, the brothers quoted the price of the lekythos to a Mr. Rowe of the Rhode Island School of Design on December 1, 1926, for a sum of nine hundred dollars. Brummer donated similar Greek lekythoi to both Tufts University and the Israel Museum after her husband’s auction in 1979.⁴⁰ After the donation of the two lekythoi to MAA, they were displayed in the Weinberg Gallery of Ancient Art, together with a separately acquired small marble head from an Attic grave stele. This small temporary exhibit was designed to illustrate Attic funerary practices and was the subject of a gallery talk. An MU graduate student wrote a paper on the lekythoi as part of the course Introduction to Graduate Study in the former Department of Art History and Archaeology.⁴¹

The third object of Brummer’s 1979 gift is a Roman head of a boy dated to the Julio-Claudian period (Fig. 12). Made of Pentelic marble, the head stands at twenty-one centimeters tall, is missing the nose and part of the chin, and also suffered much damage to other areas of the face. Despite this damage, the face remains symmetrical, which suggests, along with the fact that it faces forward, that it comes from a herm.⁴² The original Brummer object card describes the sculpture as the “head of an athlete” that is “slightly smaller than life size [sic]” and assigned the number N541 (Fig. 13).⁴³ On the back of the card, the Brummers indicated from whom and when it was



Fig. 12. Roman Head of a Boy, Julio-Claudian period, Pentelic marble. H: 21.00 cm. University of Missouri, Museum of Art and Archaeology (79.145) gift of Ella Brummer.

³⁸. P2534: Lekythos in marble. Brummer Gallery Records. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiif/p16028coll9/62680/full/full/0/default.jpg>.

³⁹. <http://www.zoumboulakis.gr/hd/istoriki-anadromi-31679.htm?lang=en&path=-881695164>.

⁴⁰. Ella Brummer donated a Greek lekythos (1982.5.1) to Tufts University in 1982 and a Greek Lekythos (78.19.173) to the Israel Museum in 1978.

⁴¹. The gallery talk, “Rituals of Death in Ancient Athens,” was given by Dr. Jane Biers, September 27, 2000. Unpublished paper by Brandon Worrell, “Two Marble Lekythoi in Missouri: Form, Chronology and Function,” 1997.

⁴². MU graduate student, Robert Darby wrote a paper on the Roman marble head titled, “A Head of its Time: A Roman Portrait of a Youth” under Dr. Kathleen Slane.

⁴³. N541: Greek fourth century BCE. Head of an athlete in Pentelic marble, slightly smaller than life-sized, with scratch across right eye. Brummer Gallery Records. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiif/p16028coll9/60503/full/full/0/default.jpg>.



Fig. 13. Brummer object card N541 for Missouri Roman bust 79.145. Brummer Gallery Records, Cloisters Library and Archives, New York. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiif/p16028coll9/60503/full/full/0/default.jpg>.

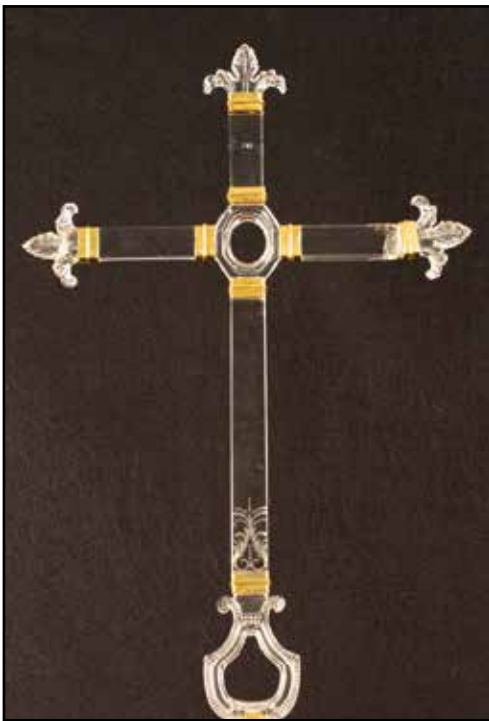


Fig. 14. Anonymous, German, Processional Cross, early 19th century, lead crystal, glass, gilt copper, and brass, University of Missouri, Museum of Art and Archaeology (82.296) gift of Ella Brummer.

purchased. The card reads, “Bought from Geladakis” in April 1922 along with three other objects for a total of eight thousand francs. The card also indicates the object’s decrease in value over time from \$22.87 in 1922 to \$18.50 in 1938. These cards highlight the Brummers’ detailed and meticulous record keeping and show how this information benefits auction houses, museums, and scholars today.

Ella Brummer’s second gift to the MAA came in December 1982, in the form of a nineteenth-century German processional cross (Fig. 14).⁴⁴ The rock crystal cross stands nearly fifty-four centimeters tall on a lyre-shaped foot. A now-missing octagonal medallion was once placed at the intersection of the arms, which are decorated with palmettes at each end. At the bottom of the cross, above the lyre-shaped foot, is a low-relief carving of two symmetrical palmettes. The Brummers purchased the cross from Brimo Laroussilhe in Paris through their New York Gallery in 1954, though this object card does not appear to be present in the Brummer Gallery Records.⁴⁵ Brummer donated a similar seventeenth-century rock crystal German processional cross to Tufts University in the same year.⁴⁶

Her third and final gift to the Museum was listed as a fifteenth-century marble bust of Christ in high relief (Fig. 15) that, after further study and inspection by the Museum’s staff, was discovered to be a nineteenth-century forgery attributed to Italian sculptor Alceo Dossena

⁴⁴. Köller and Kahane 1949 Vol. I p. 467.

⁴⁵. Köller and Kahane 1949 Vol. I p. 467.

⁴⁶. Tufts University (1982.5.2a–c).

(1878–1937), whose dealers often marketed and sold his sculptures as originals of an older style and time. The original object card, labeled N2464, includes notations from either Ernest or Joseph, but also Ella’s untidy script (Fig. 16).⁴⁷ According to the card, the bust was purchased for \$245.00 from Louis & Co. on July 13, 1928, and lost its polychrome sometime in 1930.

Conclusion

The Brummer Gallery Records offer insight into Ella’s later communications with other Museum staff, apart from her association with Saul Weinberg, after her preliminary donation in 1979. Between 1979 and 1986 Brummer communicated with directors Edzard Baumann, Osmund Overby, and Forrest McGill; registrars David Butler and Jeffrey B. Wilcox; and curator of ancient art Jane Biers. The MAA also received letters from those working on Brummer’s behalf, including Douglas C. Ewing, president of the American Association of Dealers in Ancient Oriental and Primitive Art, to communicate general information regarding the value of some donations.

After her first donation in 1979, Brummer was officially known as a benefactor to the MAA. She received and enjoyed the Museum’s annual *Muse* publication, in which her donations are noted in three volumes.⁴⁸ Her gifts to the Museum of Art and Archaeology helped the Weinbergs and others grow its collection and placed the Museum among a select set of university museums to which she disseminated objects from her husband’s collection over the course of three decades. In this way, Ella Baché Brummer also aided the mission of the Museum, which includes advancing the understanding of our artistic and cultural heritage through the study, research, and experience of students, scholars, and the broader community.

⁴⁷ N2464: High relief representing a bust of Christ in marble, polychromed. Brummer Gallery Records. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iiif/p16028coll9/60587/full/full/0/default.jpg>.

⁴⁸ “The *Muse* is beautifully edited and it is a pleasure to read it.” Correspondence from Ella Brummer to Edzard Baumann and Saul Weinberg, March 2, 1980. “Gifts and Sales to Other Museums, 1964–89.” Brummer Gallery Records.



Fig. 15. Anonymous, *Christ with the Crown of Thorns*, 15th century (possibly Alceo Dossena, 19th century), marble, H: 42.10 cm. University of Missouri, Museum of Art and Archaeology (84.119) gift of Ella Brummer.

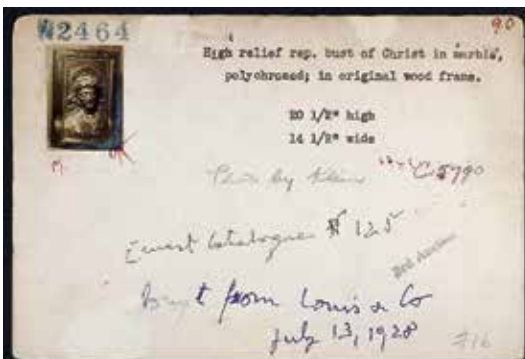


Fig. 16. Brummer object card N2464 for Missouri Marble Bust of Christ, Brummer Gallery Records, Cloisters Library and Archives, New York. <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/iii/p16028coll9/60587/full/full/0/default.jpg>.

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