


Etude de Grock -- Clown

Reference link:

<https://wayback.archive-it.org/3340/20170930000028/https://americanart.si.edu/artwork/etude-de-grock--clown-10197>

Etude de Grock--Clown




 Arthur W. Heintzelman, *Etude de Grock-Clown*, n.d., Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Chicago Society of Etchers, 1935.13.150

 Zoom

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Title	Etude de Grock-Clown
Artists	Arthur W. Heintzelman
Date	n.d.
On View	Not on view.
Dimensions	plate: 2 3/4 x 2 1/8 in. (6.9 x 5.5 cm)
Copyright	
Credit Line	Smithsonian American Art Museum Gift of Chicago Society of Etchers
Classifications	Graphic Arts Print
Keywords	Performing arts - circus - clown Figure male
Object Number	1935.13.150
Palette	

This is a strange item in our collection. We found the digital image of this sketch of Grock, made by Arthur W. Heintzelman, in the SAAM digital archive, the **Smithsonian American Art Museum**.

At the beginning we put it aside considering that we weren't able to recognise any official standard and considering the fact that the metadata are lacking. (The name of Grock appears in the title, for example, but he has not been recognised as the subject!)

Looking in the website, we found out that the institute use some guidelines called "INVENTORIES OF AMERICAN PAINTING AND SCULPTURE GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING WORKS"

(<https://s3.amazonaws.com/assets.saam.media/files/documents/2017-09/REPORT%20FORM%20GUIDELINES.pdf>) in order to assist researchers in locating America paintings and sculptures in public and private collections. We discovered that the guidelines didn't covered all our subject of interests.

After a while, we reconsidered the analysis of this object, because we thought it would have been interesting to compare the differences between this metadata schema with the one of a big and recognise standard for work of art called **Categories for the Description of Works of Art** (CDWA). The Categories for the Description of Works of Art (CDWA) are a set of guidelines for best practice in cataloging and describing works of art, architecture, other material culture, groups and collections of works, and related images, arranged in a conceptual framework that may be used for designing databases and accessing information. (CDWA includes around 540 categories and subcategories of information. A small subset of categories are considered core in that they represent the minimum information necessary to identify and describe a work.)

Finally we chose to analyze the aspects of interest of these metadata comparing them to the CDWA.

We looked for the **ideator of the item** and we immediately found the label "Artists". In the SAAM guidelines it is written that this label correspond to "The person who was primarily responsible for the overall conception and creation of the work." In CDWA we can find similar information in the category "4.1. Creator Description", in particular in the subcategory "4.1.3. Creator Identity - CORE" that is descriptive as "The identity of any one individual or corporate body that played a role in the creation of a work of art".

A great difference here is in the way they deals with unknown creator, the SAAM guidelines simply suggests to write "unknown" while the CDWA suggests to "Indicate the culture, nationality, or stylistic association of the creator". Luckily it is not our case.

We found the name of Grock in the **title**, labeled simply "Title", as "Etude de Grock--Clown". Recognize as "Title of the work" this title indicate the complete title of the work assigned by the artist. In the CDWA the category where we can find this kind of information is the "3.1. Title Text - CORE" What the SAAM guidelines find important to be specified is the possibility of the presence of an "**Analternate Titles**" where people can record any other titles by which the work is known, that might be popular titles or previous titles. CDWA doesn't specify this possibility.

In the metadata of the item there are no reference on when or where the item was created, there is not a **date** or a **place** referred to the manifestation of the item. However the guidelines consider the possibility to insert this information at least for the date in "Execution date".

In CDWA we have "4.2. Creation Date - CORE" and "CDWA: 4.3. Creation Place/Original Location" where we can find a concise description of the date or range of dates or place/places associated with the creation, design, production, presentation, performance, construction, or alteration of the work.

In the other items we found the difference between **subject** and **content**, here we can see only the label "keywords: Performing arts – circus – clown

Figure male". In the SAAM guidelines, the category "subject" gives a *brief description of the work*, including its theme or, for abstract works, it might describe the predominant forms, colors, shapes, sizes, or textures.

In the CDWA section "16.2. General Subject Terms - CORE", we might find *indexing terms* that characterize in general terms what the work depicts or what is depicted in it. This subject analysis is the minimum required by CDWA, but it can be possible to add more information about the subject in

the "31.2. Subject Name - CORE" where there are the names used to refer to the subject or its synonyms and variant.

Important is the fact the Grock is not named in this categories, Grock has not been recognize as a subject of this work of art!

From a physical point of view the **format** of the item is descriptive in the area of the table about Classifications and, as values, we found Graphic Arts and print.

In the SAAM we have two categories that deal with the physical aspect of the item, the category called "Media" and the one called " Dimensions". There it should be specify the substance in which the piece is rendered and the measurements in inches or the dimensions of a cubic volume or diameter measurements.

The CDWA simplify it with the "13.1. Physical Appearance" adding the description of salient aspects of the physical appearance of the work and its decoration, including design elements and pattern names. None of the element in the "13. Physical Description" is mandatory (not core).

In the table, about Copyright and Credit Line is specified that the Smithsonian American Art Museum physically own the item, as a result of a donation as a gift from the Chicago Society of Etchers. In the guidelines it is treat as the "**owner/address**" and it should be a list of the specific name and address of the agency, institution, or individual that currently owns or administers the long term control and care of the work.

In CDWA we have quite the same as "23.5. Owner/Agent" talking about the name of an individual or corporate body (institution, agency, or group) that owned or was in possession of the work of art.

While the place is easy to find in the "21.2. Repository/Geographic Location" which is an identification or link to a repository (corporate body) or geographic place where the work is currently or was formerly located.

Talking instead about the copyright issue, in CDWA, it is specified in "22.1. **Copyright** Statement" as a formal statement of the copyright of a work and/or any restrictions placed on it.

In this cases the responsibility for the item **distribution** should be of the Smithsonian American Art Museum that own the item, but in the metadata is written that the work of art is "not on view".

There is **not** the indication of other **contributors** to the creation of the item in our case, in case of collaboration by many artist, CDWA allow each contributor to add their role in the creation in the subcategory "4.1.4. Creator Role - CORE".