



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

Charles Willson Peale diaries  
and exhibition announcement

Archives of American Art  
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<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

# Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	1
Administrative Information .....	1
Scope and Contents.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Names and Subjects .....	2
Container Listing .....	

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Charles Willson Peale diaries and exhibition announcement
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.pealchar2
<b>Date:</b>	1765-1826
<b>Creator:</b>	Peale, Charles Willson, 1741-1827
<b>Extent:</b>	3 Microfilm reels (1 linear foot on 3 partial microfilm reel)
<b>Language:</b>	English .

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Microfilm of 26 diaries (reel 3899) purchased in 1987 from the American Philosophical Society as part of AAA's Philadelphia Arts Documentation Project. Material on reel D9 donated 1955-1962 by Charles E. Feinberg, an active donor and friend of AAA. Material on reel N68/20 lent for microfilming 1968 by Fordham University Library.

### Location of Originals

Reel 3899: Originals in: American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, except for volume 3 (Huntington Library, San Marino, CA) and volumes 7 and 9 (Fordham University Library, New York, NY).

### Location of Originals

Reel N68/20: Original in: Fordham University Library.

### Related Materials

The Archives of American Art holds the Rembrandt and Harriet Peale collection, circa 1820-1932 and the Rubens Peale diaries, 1855-1865. Also found at the Archives of American Art are the microfilmed printed material relating to Rembrandt Peale, 1830-1862; microfilmed Mary Jane Peale and Peale family selected papers, circa 1815-1897; microfilmed Titian Ramsay Peale Collection, 1771-1876; microfilmed selected Peale family papers, 1803-1854; microfilmed selected papers from the Peale-Sellers collection, circa 1767-1904; and microfilmed Augusta Barker papers, 1875-1887.

The American Philosophical Society holds the Peale-Sellers Family Collection, 1686-1963 and the Peale family papers, 1705-1898.

### Available Formats

35mm microfilm reel 3899 available at Archives of American Art offices, through interlibrary loan and at the American Philosophical Society.

### Available Formats

35mm microfilm reels D9 and N68/20 available for use at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

## Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C., Research Center. Microfilmed materials must be consulted on microfilm. Contact Reference Services for more information.

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## Biographical / Historical

Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827) was a portrait painter and engraver in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He is known for his portraits of the founding fathers including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams. In 1786 he founded the Peale Museum, and was one of the founding members of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 1805.

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## Scope and Contents

The Charles Willson Peale diaries and exhibition announcement include 26 volumes, microfilmed on Reel 3899, containing diary entries relating to family, business, travels, sittings, Peale's museum, and other topics. Microfilmed on Reel D9 is a handwritten announcement for the exhibition of Peale's *Christ at Bethesda*, March 20, 1821. This exhibition announcement is also available in miscellaneous manuscripts folder 048. Also included in the collection on microfilm reel N86/20 is a diary kept in Philadelphia and Annapolis from May 30, 1788 until May 5, 1789. Peale writes about working on his drawing machine "for taking perspective views"; about people sitting for portraits; techniques in painting; repairing pictures; travel conditions between Philadelphia and Annapolis; the operation of his Philadelphia museum; recipes for preserving birds and animals; business and travel expenses; experiment in making bifocals; and social activities and acquaintances.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Art, American  
Art, Modern -- 17th-18th centuries -- United States

Names:

Peale, Charles Willson, 1741-1827 -- Christ at Bethesda

Occupations:

Painters -- Pennsylvania -- Philadelphia