

## Babcock Galleries

**Active Dates:** 1852-present (Driscoll Babcock)

**Gallerist:** John Snedecor

**Location:**

1852	Founded <sup>1</sup>
1855-1861	544 Broadway and 38 White Street <sup>2</sup> 1860: auction at 544 Broadway <sup>3</sup>
[1860?-mid-1870s] <sup>4</sup>	768 Broadway (as Snedecor's Gallery, 1869) <sup>5</sup>
[mid-1870s-mid-1880s]	176 Fifth Avenue
[mid-1880s- 1899?]	110 W. 18 <sup>th</sup> St.
[1899?- 1911?]	366 Fifth Avenue
[1911?-1918]	107 W. 56 <sup>th</sup> St.
[1918-late 1920s]	19 E. 49 <sup>th</sup> St (as Babcock Galleries)
[late 1920s-mid 1930s]	5 E. 57 <sup>th</sup> St.
[mid-1930s-mid 1950s]	38 E. 57 <sup>th</sup> St.
[mid 1950s-late 1970s]	805 Madison Avenue
[late 1970s-late 1980s]	20 E. 67 <sup>th</sup> St.
[late 1980s-2012]	724 Fifth Avenue
[2012-present]	525 W. 25 <sup>th</sup> St. (as Driscoll Babcock)
Present	22 East 80th Street <sup>6</sup>

**Specialty:** The gallery focused primarily on American art and later with a later emphasis on European Art.

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<sup>1</sup> "Who's Who Among Art Dealers," *American Art Annual*, Volume XVII (Washington DC: American Federation of Arts, 1920), p. 423. New York Public Library. (Scanned by Google Books)

<sup>2</sup> Kevin J Avery et al. *Art in the Empire City: New York, 1825-1861*. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000), 74.

<sup>3</sup> Classified Ad, *New York Times*, January 30 1860.

<sup>4</sup> \* All locations in brackets derived from map in "Venerable Gallery in Modern Move," *Wall Street Journal*, August 10th, 2012. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10000872396390443404004577581462636419698>

<sup>5</sup> *On Free Exhibition, at John Snedecor's Art Gallery: No. 768 Broadway, New York, Paintings by Four of Our Most Eminent American Artists. Thomas Hill, Geo. L. Brown, Eastman Johnson, A. Bierstadt* (1869). Exhibition Catalogue at New York Historical Society. [Not scanned.]

<sup>6</sup> Driscoll Babcock Galleries LLC (website), Accessed April 21st, 2020, <http://www.driscollbabcock.com/>

## Gallery History

The Babcock Galleries were founded by John Snedecor in 1852, as the first New York gallery to specialize in American Art.<sup>7</sup> Early on, Snedecor served as an auctioneer and seller of artists' supplies, frames, and mirrors as well as American paintings.<sup>8</sup> "Snedecor's Gallery," experienced successes including its 1866 sale of George Inness's work, involving *Peace and Plenty*, now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art<sup>9</sup>. The gallery offered free exhibitions such as a show in 1869, "Paintings by Four of Our Most Eminent American Artists. Thomas Hill, Geo L Brown, Eastman Johnson, A. Bierstadt."<sup>10</sup>

John Snedecor died in 1896 and was succeeded as Director by his son Charles. When Charles died in 1917, the partner E.C. Babcock, who had joined the firm as a partner in 1911, assumed the position of Director and changed the gallery's name to Babcock's Galleries in 1918. The gallery continued to specialize in American paintings, handling work by Asher B Durand, Sanford Gifford, Winslow Homer, Thomas Eakins, Mary Cassat, Childe Hassam, and Marsden Hartley.<sup>11</sup>

The Babcock Gallery mounted numerous exhibitions during the years of World War II, under the directorship of Carmine Dalesio.<sup>12</sup> In addition to American Art, the gallery exhibited European art in the late 20th century. Since its original opening in 1852, the gallery has moved thirteen times, occupying buildings in Downtown, Midtown, and Chelsea. John Driscoll, who bought the gallery in 1987, oversaw many of these moves. The Driscoll Babcock gallery is currently located on East 80<sup>th</sup> Street. John Driscoll passed away in April 2020 from Covid-19.

John Driscoll Obituary:

<http://www.driscollbabcock.com/exhibitions/installation/john-driscoll-1949-2020#press-release>

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<sup>7</sup> "Who's Who Among Art Dealers," 423.

<sup>8</sup> Appendix entry in *Art in the Empire City*, 74

<sup>9</sup> John Driscoll and Micheal St. Clair. *Traditions*.

<sup>10</sup> *On Free Exhibition, at John Snedecor's Art Gallery: No. 768 Broadway, New York, Paintings by Four of Our Most Eminent American Artists. Thomas Hill, Geo. L. Brown, Eastman Johnson, A. Bierstadt* (1869). Exhibition Catalogue at New York Historical Society [Not scanned]

<sup>11</sup> Driscoll Babcock Galleries LLC.

<sup>12</sup> Doris Straus, "You Buy Art, We Buy Bond: Art Galleries in NYC during WWII."

## Illustrations



Figure 1. George Inness, *Peace and Plenty*, Oil on Canvas, 1865

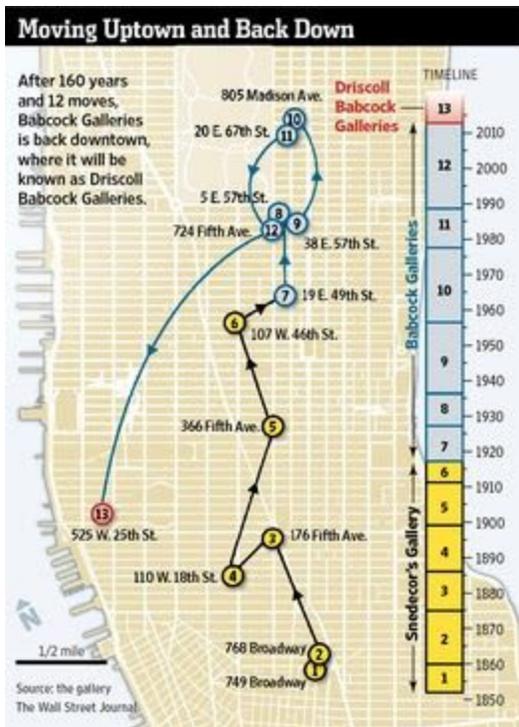


Figure 2. Map of Gallery Location Changes. Published in “Venerable Gallery in Modern Move,” *The Wall Street Journal*, August 10, 2012.

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**Authors' Initials:** PF, CT

## Primary Sources

“Babcock Galleries,” Archives Directory for the History of Collecting in America, Frick Collection. <https://research.frick.org/directory/detail/690>

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## Secondary Sources

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