

## William Schaus

**Active Dates:** 1820-1892

**Gallerist:** William Schaus

**Location:**

1853-1883	749 Broadway
1856	629 Broadway
1863	729 Broadway
1890	204 Fifth Avenue

**Specialty:** Landscapes and genre paintings of American and European artists.

### Gallery History

William Schaus opened his first gallery in 1853, and he steadily maintained different gallery spaces on Broadway Street until selling his company to his nephew, Herman Schaus, in 1886.<sup>1</sup>

William Schaus was of German descent. In 1847, he moved from Paris to work in the New York branch of Goupil & Co. He was charming, persuasive, and highly successful; after fifteen years working for Goupil & Co., and a lack of profits to reflect his success as a dealer, he left and opened his own gallery and art supply store (“Importers of Paintings, Engravings, and Artists’ Materials” [but may have been known as “William Schaus and Company”]) in 1853 at 749 Broadway.<sup>2</sup> He not only held exhibitions, but also he sold frames among various art supplies as well as published many prints. In the beginning of his independent career, he supported many American artists such as William Sidney Mount, Jasper Cropsey, and Lilly Martin Spencer.<sup>3</sup> The majority of these works were landscape paintings or depicted domestic scenes. Despite this admiration for American painters, Schaus continued to exhibit and sell European art and soon transitioned to showing European paintings, sculptures, and prints nearly exclusively. Unlike many of his fellow leading New York collectors, he occasionally bought and sold European master paintings—despite the strong fear surrounding the risk of forgeries.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "American Art News, Vol. 9, No. 18." *American Art News* 9, no. 18 (1911): 1-8.

<sup>2</sup> "American Art News, Vol. 9, No. 18."

<sup>3</sup> Goldstein, Malcolm, *Landscape with Figures: A History of Art Dealing in the United States*. Oxford University Press, New York. 2000. 55.

<sup>4</sup> "William Schaus." *Metropolitan Museum of Art*. metmuseum.org.

Schaus bought and sold the first Rembrandt to America—"The Gilder"—as well as many other notable European works of Goya, Rousseau, Gericault, Corot, Diaz, Dupre, Israels, and Van Dyck, among others.<sup>5</sup>

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### **Primary Sources**

"American Art News, Vol. 9, No. 18." *American Art News* 9, no. 18 (1911): 1-8.

### **Secondary Sources**

Goldstein, Malcolm, *Landscape with Figures: A History of Art Dealing in the United States*. Oxford University Press, New York. 2000.

St. Clair, Michael, "The Art Dealers." *The Great Chinese Art Transfer: How So Much of China's Art Came to America*. Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2016. 102.

"William Schaus." *Metropolitan Museum of Art*. metmuseum.org.

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<sup>5</sup> "William Schaus."