

The Stein Collection

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Paris Art Studies - The Steins, a chronology

1864 - Marriage of Daniel and Amelia Stein of German Jewish descent in Baltimore. Daniel is in the wholesale textile business, one of 5 brothers who emigrated to the USA in the 1840's. Daniel is authoritarian but erratic not loved by either of his children. The mother (Milly) is gentle and vague but with an obstinate, steely temper.

1865 - Birth of Michael Stein.

1870 - Birth of Sarah Anne Samuels in San Fransisco.

1872 - Birth of Leo Stein.

1874 - Birth of Gertrude Stein 3 Feb; in Allegheny Penn. (Pittsburgh). Gertrude will be forever delighted with problem French officials had of spelling "Allegheny"; on official documents.

1875 - Fallout between Daniel and brother and partner, Daniel takes family to Vienna.

1877 - Birth of Alice Babette Toklas in San Francisco (1877-1967).

1878 - Amelia settles with children in Passy in Paris.

1879 - Gertrude returns to grandparents' house in Baltimore speaking German and French but no English. Learns English at 5 and associates it with language in which emotions began to

feel themselves”;

1880 – Family move to Oakland, California where Daniel invests in real estate, stocks and cable cars. Family live in house on 10 acres, with German governess, servants, a cow and a piano.

1888 - Amelia dies of cancer.

1891 - Death of Daniel. Estate mortgaged successfully by Michael (26). All move to San Francisco.

1892 – Gertrude moves back to mother’s family in Baltimore with Bertha. Leo studies at Harvard.

1893 – Gertrude studies at Radcliffe women’s college near Harvard, philosophy, English and psychology with William James (brother of Henry). Starts writing.

1894 - Michael marries Sarah Samuels (1870-1953) daughter of a wealthy German Jewish merchant from San Francisco.

1895 – Birth of the couple’s only child Allan Daniel Stein in San Francisco. Leo admitted into law school at Harvard, gives up after a few months. Leaves USA for world tour with his cousin Fred Stein.

1896 – Gertrude travels to Europe, meets Leo in Antwerp.

1897 – Gertrude flunks Latin, cannot graduate. Studies psychology at John Hopkins in Baltimore. Leo studies biology also at John Hopkins. Both hold Jewish intellectual salon while at university.

1898 – Gertrude receives BA in medicine.

1900 – Gertrude spends summer in Italy with Leo and Mabel Weeks. Leo visits Bernard Berenson in Florence. Gertrude bored with medicine. First love affair with May Bookstaver – unhappy triangle with third student in Baltimore.

1902 – Gertrude abandons love affair and university, depressed, and joins Leo in London. Starts notebooks which will become “the Making of Americans”;

1903 - Gertrude settles in Paris

in fall with Leo at 27 rue de Fleurus (she is 29) in pavilion in courtyard with only "Yale" lock in Paris. Leo hangs Japanese prints and first modern pictures by William Steer, he buys his first Cézanne at Ambroise Vollard's gallery. Cook Héléne, a Norman, runs household on 8 francs a day. Michael and Sarah move to Paris too with son Allan, settle at 58 rue Madame where Sarah like Gertrude will also hold Saturday "salons".

1904 - Gertrude and Leo receive \$ 8000 dividend from family estate, begin buying pictures at Vollard's: 2 Cézannes, 2 Gauguins, 2 Renoirs and a Maurice Denis. Their greatest purchase that year will be "Madame Cézanne with fan".

1905 - Leo buys Matisse's "Woman with a Hat" from Fauve show at Salon d'Automne. Beginning of Saturday salon at rue de Fleurus. « De la part de qui venez vous? Mais de la votre Madame. » Their apartment is considered the first museum of modern art. Leo and Gertrude also buy their first Picassos, "The Family of Acrobats with Monkey" and "Girl with Basket of Flowers" from Clovis Sagot. They meet Picasso in November.

1906 - Dinners with professorial Matisse ("cher maître") and Amélie Matisse, Manguin, the sullen André Derain — much disliked by Gertrude. Tall, pipe smoking, Braque. Matisse will eventually bring the Russian textile magnate and collector Sergei Shuckin. Other guests are Fernande Olivier (Picasso's girlfriend), the poet and art critic Guillaume Apollinaire with his girlfriend Marie Laurencin and the mystic poet Max Jacob. Gertrude will do 80-90 sittings for her portrait by Picasso, who will also portray Leo and Allan. San Francisco earthquake. The Michael Steins return briefly to California to survey the damage. Etta and Claribel Cone frequent visitors from Baltimore, begin collecting Matisse.

1907 - Leo gives up on Picasso after seeing Demoiselles d'Avignon. Matisse now too expensive for Leo. Picasso is patronized by Gertrude exclusively. Alice Toklas arrives in Paris with friend Harriet Levy. Meets Stein at Michael's — instant coup de foudre — she is invited to walk in Luxembourg next day. Is half an hour late, Gertrude is furious.

Matisse opens his academy in old convent rue de Sèvres and in 1908 at hotel Biron with financial help from the Michael Steins. Sarah is his staunchest defender and will study under him along with Hans Purrmann and Max Weber. Sarah was unfailingly didactic, bossy and insistent that others follow her lead.

1908 -. Secret "marriage" of Gertrude and Alice on holiday in Italy in the summer. Gertrude ("lovey") is 34 and Alice ("pussy") 31. Back in Paris, Alice begins typing Gertrude's manuscripts. First Cubist word portraits (in 1909 Picasso and Matisse) — "Ada" in the texts is Alice. Sarah embraces Christian Science.

1909 - Gertrude publishes "Three Lives" with Grafton at her own expense.

1910 - Alice moves into rue de Fleurus. Leo has affair with model Nina Auzias, he marries her in 1921.

1911 - Flood of American painters in Paris, all visit Gertrude: Alfred Maurer, Max Weber, Patrick Henry Bruce, Morgan Russell, Marsden Hartley, Joseph Stella.

1913 - Final separation with Leo who moves to Italy. He keeps the Renoirs and apples by Cézanne and Gertrude the Picassos. They never meet again. Rue de Fleurus wired for electricity. Gertrude meets Carl van Vechten, NY Times music critic, later agent and literary executor.

1914 - Gertrude buys her first Juan Gris. 15 Matisse's belonging to the Michael Steins on loan to a German gallery are confiscated after declaration of war.

1915 - Prolonged stay of Gertrude and Alice in Mallorca. Development of inner, private monologues with code words, "cow" = orgasm. Leo returns to the USA and stays in Taos in New Mexico where he will study the Pueblo Indians.

1916 - Gertrude and Alice return to France.

1917 - Gertrude buys her first car, a Ford, named "auntie", drives wounded American doughboys for American fund.

1919 - Definitive return of Gertrude and Alice to Paris. Gertrude puts on weight. Loves beef and laughs "like a beefsteak" according to Mabel Dodge (divorcée, girlfriend of communist John Reed, co-organizer of Armory show, critic and Greenwich Village personality of 20s). Alice is "dainty" and oriental, wears batiks, Gertrude corduroy. Always manicuring her nails. Leo returns to Europe, settles in Settignano in Italy.

1920 - First American subscriber to Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare and Company (Sylvia girlfriend is Adrienne Mosnier). Cubists now dispersed are replaced at rue de Fleurus by young Americans. "All the young men for 2 or 3 years were 26." Saturday salons suspended for financial reasons. Gertrude and Alice start visiting other salons notably Nathalie Barney's.

New Ford: "Godiva".

1921 - Sylvia Beach introduces Gertrude to Sherwood Anderson.

1922 - Gertrude Meets Man Ray and through Anderson, Ernest Hemingway. She meets the future Surrealist painter André Masson. Estranged from Beach after publication of Ulysses (she is jealous of Joyce). Self publishes "Sacred Emily" - "a rose is a rose is a rose is a rose …

1923 - Gertrude and Alice are godmothers to Bumby son of Hadley and Ernest Hemingway. They meet Jane Heap and Margaret Anderson publishers of Little Review. Spend their first summer in Belley in the Rhône valley. Allan Stein marries an opera dancer Yvonne Rochefort Daunt.

1924 - Publication of Making of Americans in Ford Madox Ford's Transatlantic Review.

1925 – Gertrude meets J Scott Fitzgerald through Hemingway.

1926 – Gertrude assumes her characteristic short haircut. First fall out with Hemingway. Alice despite apparent frailty protects and supports Gertrude. She is the mainstay of relationship. Alice always takes up with writers' and artists' wives. Gertrude drives like a devil. The Michael Steins commission a suburban villa, Les Terraces in Garches, from the great modernist architect, Le Corbusier. They will live in it with Sarah's close Christian Science friend Gabrielle de Monzie. The Michael Steins love art, but they also have a fondness for the latest theories on health and fitness, and took up stringent new diets and exercise regiments with enthusiasm.

1927 - Nathalie Barney (whose girlfriend is Romaine Brooks) organizes public readings of Making of Americans at her literary salon on rue Jacob, the "académie des femmes". New painters in Gertrude's circle are the neo-romantics Pavlik Tcheelitchev, Eugene and Leonid Berman (stage designers) and Christian Bérard. Birth of Allan's son Daniel.

1928 - New car and poodle: "Basket".

1929 – Gertrude and Alice rent their "house of dreams" Billignin in the Rhône valley for summer.

1930 – Gertrude's first and last meeting with Joyce. Allan Stein and Yvonne divorce. He remarries Roubina Alexanian.

1932 – Gertrude writes Autobiography of Alice B Toklas in 6 weeks. New artist friends is former Dadaist Francis Picabia.

1933 – Publication of "Autobiography", it is an immediate best seller. All her friends and artists are consternated by what they consider to be a pack of lies and distortions.

1934-35 – Gertrude undertakes lecture tour in USA. At Algonquin in NY she is mobbed by the press – does radio broadcast. Lectures to bewildered public at MoMA and Mid West universities. Invited to White house by

Eleanor Roosevelt. Flies to LA, declines movie offer and visits San Francisco.

1935 - Michael Steins sell their villa and return to USA, they settle in Palo Alto.

1938 - Lease runs out at rue de Fleurus. Gertrude and Alice move to 5 rue Christine. Visits from Cecil Beaton – death of Basket replaced by Basket II. Death of Michael Stein of cancer at 73.

1939 - At outbreak of war Alice and Gertrude close up rue Christine and move permanently to Billignin. Take Picasso portrait and Mme Cézanne. Decide to remain France despite American Consulate warning.

1940- Allan Stein with his wife Roubina and little boy Michael leave France for California. Leo remains in Italy with Nina.

1941-42 – Gertrude and Alice are at first sympathetic to Pétain regime. Gertrude tries to translate “paroles aux français” into English. Protected through war by Vichy official Bernard Fay.

1943 – They move to Le Colombier after Billignin lease ends. No vegetable garden in new house, long treks in search of food in the country. Pierre Balmain sends clothes. Stein sympathizes with surrounding maquisards.

1944 - Liberated by first American troops coming up from south. Return to Paris – reunion with Hemingway and Picasso. Allan Steins return to Europe where Allan continues his profession of race horse trainer.

1945 - Rue Christine invaded by enthusiastic GIs. Invited by Life magazine Gertrude tours American bases in Germany.

1946 - Intestinal attacks. Gertrude diagnosed with colon cancer. Dies at American Hospital in Neuilly. Buried in Père Lachaise. She leaves her portrait by Picasso to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The rest of the art collection is left to her nephew Allan with Alice reserving the right to keep it during her lifetime and sell (with heirs’ permission) what is necessary for her subsistence.

1947 – Death of Leo Stein at 75 following an operation. Daniel Stein, Allan’s son, buys his first race horse. Sarah will sell much of her collection to pay his bills and debts in the future.

1951 – Death of Allan Stein (at 55) who leaves his collection to his wife Roubina and their children.

1953 – Death
of Sarah Stein at 83 in San Francisco.

1957 – Alice
converts to Catholicism.

1960 – During
her absence in a Catholic retreat in Italy, Allan's heirs sequester collection, accusing
Alice of having sold works without their knowledge and not insuring collection
properly. The works are placed in a vault in Chase Manhattan Bank in Paris.

1964 – Alice
is expelled from the rue Christine apartment. Moves to modern building on rue
de la Convention in the 15th arrdt.

1967 - Alice dies at 89 in Paris. In will
insists on Catholic burial.

1968 – A
consortium of administrators and patrons of the museum of Modern Art in New
York raise funds to buy what is left of the Getrude Stein collection for the
museum.