

Third Floor

It is rumored that when this was the studio of Frank Duveneck, one of his female Art Academy students fell desperately in love with him. He did not return her affections and eventually the deranged art student hung herself in this very room. Perhaps the mysterious incidents of the ceiling motion detectors activating by themselves are not so mysterious.

Did you see a ghost tonight?

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Ghost Tour Guide



The following stories are based on *real* accounts of ghosts and spookiness over the years at the Cincinnati Art Museum

Proceed with caution!

#CAMConjuring #HauntedMuseum

Gallery 108

The Samuel Best Tall-Case Clock

Calling out for Company

It seems that certain objects come to life when the visitors and staff are not looking, perhaps they have brought with them the essence of the previous owners....or creators. The tall case clock was built by Samuel Best who lived and worked in Cincinnati around 1815 as a silversmith, creating anything from engraving plates for banks, silverware, locks and timepieces. When this section of the gallery was being installed a curator and an art handler were both working in the adjoining gallery, when they heard a boooooong boooooong coming from the around the corner where the Samuel Best clock was positioned. The curator and art handler looked at each other, both realizing that the clock weights had been removed prior to installation. According to the curator the art handler walked slowly around the corner, and in a moment he quickly emerged walking quickly back to the G. 121. He simply said, "It's time to go home now" and never spoke of the incident again.

Samuel Best, in addition to his business, also added to the cultural growth of the new city. According to a 1814 newspaper advertisement, his wife also offered French classes at their home. These classes for "ladies who wished to learn this useful and fashionable language" were held around the corner from his Walnut Street business. Perhaps the chiming clock remembers the cheerful laughter of these gatherings during Cincinnati's early years, and was looking to draw youthful voices for lessons again.

Gallery 110

Bronze Effigy of Elizabeth Boott Duveneck

Parted Too Soon

Elizabeth Boott married artist Frank Duveneck in 1886 after a six-year engagement. Their love was a meeting of minds, their marriage of joining of vastly different worlds. (*compare two portraits*) Elizabeth Boott came from a wealthy Boston family while Duveneck was Kentucky-born of German immigrants who ran a beer garden. They met at one of his exhibitions in Boston, and later she tracked him down in Europe while he was teaching in Munich, Germany. Their extended courtship was a result of her own artistic ambitions as well as the barriers of class difference. They finally married just before her fortieth birthday. She had a child, and the couple moved to Paris, where she and Frank were taking part in an art show. (*show an example of her work and of Frank's*), but Lizzie, as Frank called her playfully, caught a chill on the way home. In four days, just two years after their marriage, Lizzie died of pneumonia. He created this, his only attempt at sculpture, in her honor, her body graced by palm leaves suggesting triumph over death. In this gallery a member of the front desk staff walked by on a slow Wednesday evening and hearing a cough turned around expecting to see a security guard, only to face a deserted gallery. The only sound was small voice whispering, "Frank."

Gallery 111

Solder's Joy Ballroom

It has been said that a man dressed as a Civil War soldier has been seen by security guards strolling through these galleries, or languidly leaning on an invisible wall. This gallery used to be home to a ballroom built in 1806. The ballroom belonged in a manor house from Nelson County Virginia, the home of Revolutionary War veteran, Jordan Cabell. The Federal style Ballroom remained intact up to and through the American Civil War. The house's name was Solder's joy, and it was a popular place for parties and dances at the beginning of the conflict. Perhaps this spirit has returned to the spot he remembered best at the time of his death on the battlefield, still watching couples waltzing, ever-vigilant for a chance to cut-in.

Gallery 115

Louis XV French Salon

Before these galleries held Rookwood pottery, they housed a salon from an eighteenth-century French building, on the Rue de Braque in Paris. When a collector purchased the paneling from the room in 1931, the room was part of the Hotel Montmorency. Although the salon had seen many visitors, one refused to leave.

After this room was deinstalled, this part of the building held offices for the secretarial pool. One evening as the some of the staff were working late they heard one woman moving her furniture in the adjoining office. Although this was strange thing to do, they all simply laughed and went home. The next morning, when they questioned their fellow office mate about working late, she replied that she has gone home at five. Then she asked why they had moved her desk to the other side of the room. Perhaps the hotel's original owner was still arranging her sitting room to her liking.

Dewitt Entrance

Rosemary was a security guard here at the Art Museum for many years, often working at Post Seven. One day she called in sick, which was unusual, but a fellow security guard, Kim, saw her bright and early the next morning in the Front Lobby of the Museum walking briskly back to the stairs going down to post 7. He was a little insulted that she ignored him when he said a cheerful "good morning!" to her. When he went to the lounge for break, and complained about Rosemary's rudeness, when the other guards looked at him silently. "What is it?" he demanded, and the other guards slowly told him that Rosemary had died in her sleep the day before.

Gallery 209

The spirits dwelling in the portrait gallery are protective rather than mischievous. Ray was dusting in this gallery when suddenly the gallery lights and, strangely, the emergency lights flipped off. Ray was expecting to hear a voice from the intercom system from the security office tell him what happened, but it was just silence and darkness. He stood still for a while, but got frightened and began to move, when a voice said, "Stay still, 'twill be all right." He turned to the voice, but stayed in one place until the lights came on shortly afterwards. He was facing Mr. Sedgewick, who smiled back in the dim light.

Gallery 203

As you step into the 12th century chapel of San Baudelio, you can almost feel the cold whispers of generations of the faithful within its walls. One located in northern Spain, these frescoes were created on the edge of Christian Spain, as the southern castles/regions were ruled by Muslim military leaders. Even this room's style is stamped by rich Islamic architecture that has influenced Spanish culture. This room, however, has also been stamped with a spirit from far away. A black hooded figure, which overnight guards have briefly glimpsed facing the chapel, and who then floats upwards. A Spanish monk, perhaps still finding solitary peace gazing at this medieval master's paintings. Reminded of Jesus' celebrated walk into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, perhaps this lost soul believes himself in heaven surrounded by the grace of these scenes.

Gallery 216

This is one of the oldest parts of the Museum, and in 1890s and early 1900s it held a series of the Art Museum special exhibitions. At this time, however, two floors directly below held an exhibit of the newly acquired Steckelmann collection of African Art, making the Cincinnati Art Museum the first Art Museum to collect art from this continent. Perhaps Mr. Steckelmann brought more back than he bargained for, as several security guards have seen a floating, faint, ball of light rising from the floor to the ceiling, as if trying to escape. Perhaps it was the Female Figure from Gabon. Used as a protector in the home, she may still be trying to escape back to the home where she once stood on guard.