

Gendered Artistry and Inequitable Fame in 19th Century America:

The Legacies of Julia McEntee Dillon and Jervis McEntee

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While in Kingston, New York, an excellent place to visit for someone interested in local history would be the Ulster County Historical Society's Bevier house. Despite a current exhibit on Byrdcliffe, Cragmoor, and more modern artists, some visitors might find themselves drawn to the genre-specific rooms. In the Victorian-themed room, on opposing walls are two paintings that are tied to each other in a very unexpected way.

The one to the right is a painting of numerous flowers in a bowl (Figure 1). The bowl is full and black, resting on some sort of table that eventually blends into the background of the painting. Bright shades of yellow, red, and pink roses are at various stages of budding and blooming, spilling out onto the surface of the table. The brush strokes are a bit loose, but whoever painted knew what they were doing. Paintings like this were typical in middle-class homes in the 1800s.

The one to the left is a vertical landscape painting (Figure 2). There is a significant amount of detail in this painting, but it is vague enough that it could be anywhere in New York. Overwhelmingly green, there looks to be no way out, and the ground melts into the leaves overhead. Three white trees stand erect, in contrast to the green, in the front left side of the painting with another one a bit farther back on the right. All the trees canopy the area making it a dark and green, a peaceful escape in the middle of the woods. It is more likely that visitors would know this artist over the other.

These are the paintings of artists Julia Dillon, who dedicated her time to flower still lifes, and Jervis McEntee, a male landscape artist who was a member of the Hudson River School. They were cousins who both painted from the mid to late nineteenth century and received some renown and fame in their lifetimes. McEntee, especially within the last few years, has received

more attention and study on a national and academic level than his cousin Dillon. While he earned his fame for his talent and beautiful paintings, many times he is studied by scholarship in his association with other famous artists in the Hudson River School, such as Sanford Gifford and Frederic Church. Many studies have also focused on his diary because of how detailed it is and how much information about the age the source revealed. Julia Dillon was a well known in Kingston. Due to gender discrimination in the construction of the art world in the nineteenth century and the later art historical canon, Jervis McEntee became more successful in his career and more widely studied by academics than his cousin Julia Dillon. Since the two artists are from remarkably similar social and economic backgrounds and shared many connections in New York City and the art world, they are an interesting case study into what may have been possible had each other been born the opposite gender. This is a phenomenon that begs to be further examined.

Art History As A Discipline and the Art World of the 19th Century

Art historians created a hierarchy of mediums, the form the art is created in,¹ based upon a perceived amount of skill and prestige in the object. The earliest clearest example of this hierarchy was established by Vasari's famous *Lives of the Artists* from the Renaissance and has remained a large part of the study today.² Within this hierarchy, there are smaller subdivisions in the mediums, the most strict in regards to paintings and flat art. Typically the most respected and highly regarded of these paintings are history paintings. They have previously been done by the most talented and respected artists, for high paying clients. These usually depict either scenes of

¹ This can be applied to everything from painting and sculpture to weaving and metal work

² Alessandra Gibba. "Treatise: Painting." Grove Art.

classical mythology, stories from the Judeo-Christian Bible, or events of national history.³ Next is portrait painting, in which the artist captures the likeness of either the patron or someone for their patron. Genre painting then follows: a style depicts events in everyday life and familiar situations.⁴ The next is landscape painting, which is then usually followed by and sometimes put beneath the painting of animals.⁵ Still life painting is considered the lowest and least skillful of all kinds of painting. Still lifes are disregarded by most scholars because of the perceived lack of skill it requires. With almost no attempts to capture human physiology or things that move it, the style was typically reserved for amateurs, student's early careers, and women artists.⁶

There are various reasons why men have excluded women from the art historical narrative and the study of history in general. Many historians have found that women's paintings of higher skill have been falsely attributed to men, due to their frequent working in the workshops of their fathers, husbands, and brothers.⁷ It was also exceptionally hard for women to receive proper artistic training to the standard of their male counterparts due to the constraints of mobility defined by their spheres within society, especially before the twentieth century.⁸ They were rarely allowed into classes on anatomy and were often forced to study the human form through statues or relegated to non-moving topics altogether. It was also tough for them to compete at the same level as men due to the restriction of their movements within society.⁹ For this reason, many women spent their time painting things lower in the painting hierarchy than

³ Gibba. "Treatise: Painting." Grove Art.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Michael Hatt, and Charlotte Klonk. *Art History: A Critical Introduction to Its Methods*. (Manchester University Press, 2006), 152

⁶ Ibid 151

⁷ Ibid 151

⁸ Ibid 151

⁹ Jean Gordon, "Early American Women Artists and the Social Context in Which They Worked." *American Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (1978): 56

their male counterparts; most often paintings of still lifes. They were also “less precise” in their techniques, so their work considered sloppier, a result of a lack of access to training. The historians who constructed the canon in the early days of art historical study found their work “less worthy of study.”¹⁰ Even Mary Cassatt, one of the best known and era-defining modern women artists, was intentionally excluded from the canon until later revisions of art history textbooks.

With the rise of feminist historical studies in the 1960s and 1970s, more women artists were written into the main art historical canon. However there is still a problem with the canon being fixed in this way. As Linda Nochlin's 1972 essay “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists” argues, by just putting women back into the canon, they are held to a more masculine standard. This perpetuates the idea that a talented woman in art is exceptional or a fluke, which ultimately damages the study of these women.¹¹ She then goes on to argue why there has not been “a female Michelangelo,” citing difficulty in acquiring a higher level of training, unequal access to art, and opportunities due to functioning within “gendered spheres,” and the rigid hierarchy of craft.¹² For this reason, many women’s early contributions to art history were seen as unimportant to the art historical narrative by the men who constructed the canon. The historical canon, as well as the art world, were initially structured in a way that favored male success over female success, which still to this day makes it harder for women to be recognized for their artistic achievements.¹³

¹⁰ Hatt, and Klonk. *Art History: A Critical Introduction to Its Methods*. (Manchester University Press, 2006), 151

¹¹ Ibid 151

¹² Ibid 151

¹³ Jean Gordon, "Early American Women Artists and the Social Context in Which They Worked." *American Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (1978): 55

Julia Dillon and Gender Inequality

The Industrial Revolution of the 1800s allowed for the movement of certain kinds of work out of the home, such as making clothing or food preparation, giving more time for women to follow their goals.¹⁴ The changes in technology also created a middle class with more money to spend on “leisurely items.” This new class of people, looking to assert their wealth, began collecting art and becoming patrons of artists in the hopes of establishing themselves as members of the higher class. As a result, this created a broader art market and allowed for more women to become artists. While at this point women had come far in their artistic studies, they still ran into issues receiving formal training. Met with problems trying to enter into nude drawing classes due to unfeminine obscenity, women were forced to learn about the anatomy of humans based on statues,¹⁵ instead than the live models. This put them at a disadvantage to their male counterparts. Eventually art classes specifically for women were offered at institutions such as the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the Museum School in Boston, and the New York Academy of Design.¹⁶ American women also started attending international schools in London, Rome, Munich, and Paris. While the school were still profoundly gendered and sexist in their lesson plans offered significantly more freedom to women than American schools ever did.¹⁷

With so much resistance from classical art training, many women sought out different organizations and paths to becoming artists such as working in fields of arts that were considered

¹⁴ Gordon, "Early American Women Artists and the Social Context in Which They Worked." *American Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (1978): 55-56

¹⁵ Ibid 59

¹⁶ Melissa Dabakis, "Feminist Interventions: Some Thoughts on Recent Scholarship about Women Artists." *American Art* 18, no. 1 (2004): 5

¹⁷Ibid 5-6

‘unconventional’ or ‘lesser’ such as in design, wallpaper, and book illustrations.¹⁸ There was simultaneously a rise and dominance of women working in applied arts like textiles, embroidery, and chromolithic designs. Careers in these fields provided middle-class women with money and the ability to support themselves, both of which helped to subvert contrary beliefs of women working and other ideas perpetuated by the cult of Victorian domesticity.¹⁹ Painting in a general sense had always been something that some upper-class women learned and did for leisure. Art classes opened to the public making creating art more accessible to the middle and lower classes. This increase of classes also led to a rise in teachers who were mostly women and eventually made it, so there were more women art teachers on a local level than men.²⁰ Artists such as sculptor Harriet Hosmer, impressionist Mary Cassatt, portrait painter Sarah Peale, and genre painter Lilly Martin Spencer achieved relative fame in their lifetimes and broke from the restraints society had put on their art. However, they were anomalies.

Despite some women’s ability to ‘move to higher forms of art,’ many women painters found themselves relegated to still lifes, compared to a majority of male painters who worked on more grandiose art.²¹ Flowers and fruit were the most common subjects of the still lifes.²² An intricate part of the aesthetic and symbolist movement, flowers were always connected to women in art, even in paintings generally created by men, such as portraits and genre paintings.²³ Because of a perceived association with women and flowers, painting flowers was considered

¹⁸ Melissa Dabakis, "Feminist Interventions: Some Thoughts on Recent Scholarship about Women Artists." *American Art* 18, no. 1 (2004): 5

¹⁹ Ibid 5

²⁰ Gordon, "Early American Women Artists and the Social Context in Which They Worked." *American Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (1978): 61

²¹ Ibid 61

²² Annette Stott, "Floral Femininity: A Pictorial Definition." *American Art* 6, no. 2 (1992): 74

²³ Ibid 61

inherently feminine. Male artists continued this trope of “floral-female paintings,” which advanced the idea that women artists only belonged painting flowers.²⁴ Artists who worked from home or exhibited in smaller shows, which was a majority of women, were viewed as amateurs. The same title was applied to those who worked in watercolors, miniatures, and fiber arts, making them appropriate for the private sphere and therefore feminine activity.²⁵

Julia McEntee Dillon was born on March 1, 1834, to Charles McEntee IV and Christina McEntee.²⁶ Charles moved to Rondout on the advice of his older brother James McEntee. Charles and James McEntee came from a family of Scottish-Irish farmers who arrived in America in roughly 1794.²⁷ After losing both of their parents in 1808, the McEntee siblings were separated and raised by different neighbors.²⁸ James McEntee worked on canal building in his early adulthood, first on the Erie then later on the Delaware and Hudson canal. This work brought him to Rondout.²⁹ Upon listening to his brother’s advice, Charles McEntee was able to captain and own one of the first barges for shipping coal along the Delaware Hudson canal. Eventually, Charles made his fortune through his shipping and merchandising business Ellis and McEntee.³⁰ He married Christina Temper and had ten children, only five survived to adulthood. The eldest was Julia Dillon, who was closest to her sisters Lillie,³¹ Anna,³² and brother John McEntee.³³

²⁴Stott, "Floral Femininity: A Pictorial Definition." *American Art* 6, no. 2 (1992): 62

²⁵Ibid 74

²⁶Sanford Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 1

²⁷Jervis McEntee Diaries. "From 1872 to 1890." Archives for American Art. 2007.

²⁸*Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 4

²⁹Lowell Thing, *Street That Built a City: McEntee's Chestnut Street, Kingston, and the Rise of New York*. (Black Dome Press, 2015). 4.

³⁰Ibid. 9

³¹ who married a local man named Brown and was a painter of watercolors,

³² who married a local man named Norton

³³ John became Dillon’s business partner.

Dillon and John, both attended the Clinton Liberal Institute, a Universalist school,³⁴ which advocated for the education of women. The exact dates the two attended are unclear.³⁵ Dillon appeared on a roll of the school in 1850.³⁶ She attended basic art classes and was encouraged to draw while she was at the school by her teachers Mary Conky and Sarah Hutchins.³⁷ Julia Dillon returned to Rondout in her 20s and then in 1866, married John Dillon, her brother's business partner in Rondout Ironworks. Together they moved into a house on East Chestnut Street where James McEntee often visited because he enjoyed the company of his niece.³⁸ In July 1872 at the age of 38, Julia Dillon set out to Paris to study painting.³⁹ When she returned months later, she was determined to make her hobby into a career. She even asked her cousin Jervis McEntee if she could use his studio during his months in the city, which he allowed.⁴⁰

Dillon's husband died in 1873 after seven years of marriage. Most accounts do not say precisely what John Dillon died of. However he was an alcoholic, and it is assumed his death was due to complications related by overconsumption of alcohol.⁴¹ By several accounts, the marriage had been a miserable one.⁴² McEntee even remarked that John Dillon's death was "happily closing a life that had become a burden to himself and friends."⁴³ This statement clearly

³⁴ Schuyler, *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*. (Cornell University Press, 2012.) 111

³⁵ Thing, *Street That Built a City: McEntee's Chestnut Street, Kingston, and the Rise of New York*. (Black Dome Press, 2015). 46

³⁶ Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 1

³⁷ Documents on Julia Dillon's "Apple Blossoms" and "Floral Spray in a basket" provided by Historic Huguenot Street in Kingston New York

³⁸ Thing, *Street That Built a City: McEntee's Chestnut Street, Kingston, and the Rise of New York*. (Black Dome Press, 2015). 31

³⁹ Documents on Julia Dillon's "Apple Blossoms" and "Floral Spray in a basket" provided by Historic Huguenot Street in Kingston New York

⁴⁰ Jervis McEntee Diaries. "From 1872 to 1890." Archives for American Art. 2007.

⁴¹ Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 5

⁴² Levy, in person interview by author, March 3, 2018

⁴³ Jervis McEntee Diaries. "From 1872 to 1890." Archives for American Art. 2007.

shows that Dillon's family was not fond of the man. Dillon, however, never remarried, continued to use her married name, and took over his place in the business with her brother acting as not only a manager but a partner.⁴⁴ This business supported her financially and allowed for her to live without needing to depend on her paintings as a source of income.

In the 1870s, Dillon spent more time in New York City to build on her career as an artist by being directly in the art market. She spent extended amounts of time with her cousins Jervis McEntee and Calvin Vaux⁴⁵ as well as other members of the Hudson River School, despite the beginning of its decline. She returned to Paris for the second time in 1876 and studied under Harry Thompson and Georges Jeannin, who influenced her work greatly.⁴⁶ Dillon came back to America in 1880 and resolved to stay in the city, getting a studio at the 10th street studio⁴⁷ and later at the Stuyvesant building in Brooklyn.⁴⁸ By the end of the 1870's, she began exhibiting at the National Academy of Design in New York and the Brooklyn Art Association.⁴⁹

While she was in New York City Julia Dillon was able to achieve some mild fame and renown as a female artist.⁵⁰ She was known well enough to be mentioned by name in a Montana and Canadian newspaper in 1879⁵¹ and 1886,⁵² respectively. During her time living in New York City, at least 32 of her paintings were shown at the National Academy in New York. Dillon also did watercolors for the American Watercolor Society,⁵³ which at the time were still seen as

⁴⁴ Sanford Levy, "Julia, Jervis, and Joseph ." *Jenkinstown Antiques*.

⁴⁵ Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 2

⁴⁶ Ibid 5

⁴⁷ Ibid 5

⁴⁸ Jervis McEntee Diaries. "From 1872 to 1890." *Archives for American Art*. 2007.

⁴⁹ Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 4

⁵⁰ Ibid 10

⁵¹ "Fannie Palmer's Letters: Warmth in the Metropolis-- Deserting Town for Country-- The Coaching Club-- Church Affairs-- Blessing the Cathedral-- Annual Exhibition of Paintings-- Progress of Women in Art-- A Repugnant Criticism of the Sex." *Helena Weekly Herald*, June 19, 1879. Accessed March 4, 2018.

⁵² "Literature ." *The Ottawa Free Trader* , June 26, 1886. Accessed March 4, 2018.

⁵³ Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 10

inherently feminine. In 1882 Dillon was chosen to illustrate the month of May in *The Artists Year: Original and Selected Poems of Months* by Margaret P. Janes with various other artists of the time.⁵⁴ She also exhibited her painting *Morning Glories* at the 1892 World Columbian Exhibition, in Chicago where she won an award.⁵⁵ However, she grew very homesick, even writing later in her 1915 pamphlet *Old Gardens of Kingston*, “But oh friend it was homesickness that clipped my wings.”⁵⁶ In 1895 Julia Dillon returned to Kingston permanently. She moved into a house at 109 Pearl Street which she used as both her studio and home.⁵⁷

Upon returning to Kingston, she became a part of many local groups, such as the DAR, Daughters of the American Revolution. Dillon was influential in the founding of the Kingston City Hospital, the Kingston Library, and the Ulster County Garden Club, where she served as its president until her death.⁵⁸ She also taught art classes from her home,⁵⁹ continued engaging with the community and relating to the youth, by greatly enjoying their presence and company. Dillon had a live-in nurse and housekeeper, Annie Dinan, with her at the end of her life.⁶⁰ After living in Kingston and at Pearl Street for over twenty years, Julia Dillon died on January 21, 1919. Without a will, all of her possessions, including 109 Pearl Street, were inherited by her sisters Lillie Brown and Anna Norton.⁶¹ After Brown died, Julia’s house, four of her paintings, and all

⁵⁴Margaret P. Janes, *The Artist’s Year: Original and Selected Poems of the Months*. (New York: White, Stokes, & Allen,) 1886.

⁵⁵Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 13

⁵⁶ Julia McEntee Dillon, *Old Gardens of Kingston*. (New York: Ulster County Garden Club, 1915).

⁵⁷ Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 10

⁵⁸ Sanford Levy, "Julia, Jervis, and Joseph ." Jenkinstown Antiques.

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ “Death of Mrs. Julia Dillon, World Famous Painter of Flowers Dead at Home in This City,” *The Kingston Daily Freeman*, Wednesday, January 22, 1919.

⁶¹Ibid

of her remaining assets were given to the Old Dutch Church, which both she and her sisters were members of.⁶²

Jervis McEntee and the Hudson River School

The painting hierarchy has remained ridged in most of art history but, early American art provides one of the few examples of the subversion. Landscape painting in the beginnings of the country gains nearly equal or even higher footing as something above it in the hierarchy within American culture.⁶³ Starting in the Jacksonian period of American history in the late eighteenth century, art of the country, appealed to the beginnings of nationalism that gripped the citizens of America. The Hudson River School described a series of landscape painters from the nineteenth century who painted distinctly American landscapes.⁶⁴ These artists were not part of a formal art academy but, they all of them knew each other, were mostly based in New York City and spent their time traveling and painting scenes of the wilderness. These works simultaneously brought attention to the natural beauty of the American frontier, while increasing tourism to upstate New York⁶⁵ and rooting American Art within a similar tradition as European landscapes.⁶⁶ The school and many of its artists spent their time trying to establish the same kind of prestige that landscape artists received at European academies and put American art firmly into the canon.

⁶² Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 13

⁶³ David Schuyler, *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*. (Cornell University Press, 2012.) 116-117

⁶⁴ *McEntee & Company November 25, 1997, to January 17, 1998*. (New York: Beacon Hill Fine Art. 1997.)

⁶⁵ Ibid

⁶⁶ Schuyler, *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*. (Cornell University Press, 2012.) 10

The founder of the school, painter and English expatriate Thomas Cole, started the movement in 1825⁶⁷ with his depictions of upstate New York and the Adirondacks. His work defined the early period of the school's relevance, public perception, and presence. The school also drew significant influence from the writings of John Ruskin and the poetry of William Bryant,⁶⁸ both of whom advocated for the practice of *plein air painting*, described as “transcribing nature's true form”⁶⁹ in which the artist tried to capture the most realistic landscape they could. There was always the insistence of being one with nature and depicting a world that had never been touched by man. Cole is remembered as one of the earliest people to discuss the idea of conservation and how vital the wilderness of America is.⁷⁰ This ideology was not shared by all the artists who are associated with the school, many of them worked for industrialists and railway magnets. That was not true for Kingston artist Jervis McEntee, who in his work and life is in a place between nature and industrialization. This calling back to the beauty and importance of his predecessor Thomas Cole.⁷¹

Jervis McEntee was born on July 14, 1828,⁷² to James and Sarah McEntee in the Town of Rondout. Jervis McEntee's father was brought to Rondout through working on the Delaware and Hudson Canal.⁷³ After the death of his first wife, Mary Swan, he married Sarah Goetschius, a

⁶⁷ Schuyler, *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*. (Cornell University Press, 2012.) 30-31

⁶⁸ *Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 9

⁶⁹ Kerry Dean Carso, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Between Nature and Industry: Jervis McEntee and Rondout*, (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 41

⁷⁰ Schuyler, *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*. (Cornell University Press, 2012.) 37

⁷¹ Carso, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Between Nature and Industry: Jervis McEntee and Rondout*, (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 37

⁷² *Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 7

⁷³ Thing, *Street That Built a City: McEntee's Chestnut Street, Kingston, and the Rise of New York*. (Black Dome Press, 2015). 4.

woman of Dutch Huguenot descent and the daughter of the Minister at the local Dutch Reformed Church.⁷⁴ The two had seven children who survived to adulthood; the oldest was Jervis McEntee; who was born the year that the canal opened to the public. He was named after both James McEntee's supervisor on the Canal, John Jervis, and the town of Port Jervis.⁷⁵ All of the McEntee siblings remained close throughout their adult lives,⁷⁶ often visiting each other. His two sisters— Mary Sawn and her husband Calvert Vaux as well as Lucy and her Civil War officer husband who later moved out west— had the most influence on his life and artwork.⁷⁷

For a significant amount of McEntee's childhood, his family owned and managed the Mansion House Hotel.⁷⁸ It had various guests, including the poet Henry Pickering. Pickering took an interest in McEntee. He took him on walks with the boy in nature and spent time with him. Later in life, McEntee attributed most of his love of nature and art to Pickering.⁷⁹ He started to paint at an early age, carrying watercolors with him and spending his money on paper and canvas when he could.⁸⁰ The McEntee children may have attended Kingston Academy for their adolescent education, but later in life, Jervis McEntee, as well as his siblings, attended the Clinton Liberal Institute with their cousins. All of them lived at the school where they were

⁷⁴ Thing, *Street That Built a City: McEntee's Chestnut Street, Kingston, and the Rise of New York*. (Black Dome Press, 2015). 9

⁷⁵ Carso, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Between Nature and Industry: Jervis McEntee and Rondout*, (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 37

⁷⁶ McEntee's other 4 siblings were Sara, who became the first woman doctor in Ulster County and Kingston and never married. Augusta, who married a man named Tomkins and remained in Kingston. Girard resided in the Kingston area permanently, founding an insurance agency, and Maurice who was in the navy during the Civil War.

⁷⁷ *Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 16

⁷⁸ *Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 6

⁷⁹ *McEntee & Company November 25, 1997, to January 17, 1998*. (New York: Beacon Hill Fine Art. 1997.)

⁸⁰ *A Selection of Drawings by Jervis McEntee from the Lockwood DeForest Collection, May 4- May 28, 1976*. (New York: Hirschl and Adler Galleries Inc. 21 East 67 Street New York, 1976.)

watched over by their uncle Philip, who lived close by.⁸¹ It is unclear whether McEntee, like his cousin Dillon, received any artistic training while in school because those lessons were often reserved exclusively for female pupils. That being said, it is possible that he might have gained a bit of formal training while at the school.⁸²

In 1848, Jervis McEntee wrote to Asher Durand, a member of the first generation of the Hudson River School painters. McEntee attempted to become his student, but Durand declined.⁸³ McEntee instead used Durand's series "Letters on Painting," adapting aspects of his style and technique while developing his own unique style.⁸⁴ His early style was marked by the common practice in the Hudson River School of *plein air painting* and attempts to be as accurate to nature as he could.⁸⁵ McEntee was 22 years old when the National Academy of Design accepted one of his paintings for a show in 1850.⁸⁶ That same year, Frederic Church, the only ever pupil of Thomas Cole, took on McEntee as a student for the winter in New York City.⁸⁷ The two got along well and maintained their friendship for years after. McEntee developed the same skill as Church in oil sketching, creating precise details and light effects.⁸⁸ By his mid-twenties, McEntee

⁸¹ Thing, *Street That Built a City: McEntee's Chestnut Street, Kingston, and the Rise of New York*. (Black Dome Press, 2015). 46

⁸² Sanford Levy, in person interview by author, March 3, 2018

⁸³ *Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 8

⁸⁴ Lee A. Vedder, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School*,. (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 15

⁸⁵ Ibid 16

⁸⁶ Thing, *Street That Built a City: McEntee's Chestnut Street, Kingston, and the Rise of New York*. (Black Dome Press, 2015). 44

⁸⁷ *A Selection of Drawings by Jervis McEntee from the Lockwood DeForest Collection, May 4- May 28, 1976*. (New York: Hirschl and Adler Galleries Inc. 21 East 67 Street New York, 1976.)

⁸⁸ Vedder, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School*,. (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 16-17

had mastered the styles and aesthetics that marked the Hudson River School as such a distinguished group of artists.⁸⁹

In 1852, McEntee returned to Kingston and started working for the flour and feed business but was deeply unhappy.⁹⁰ In November 1854, McEntee married the daughter of his old headmaster, Gertrude Sawyer,⁹¹ and had his architect friend Calvert Vaux to design a cottage studio for him and his wife. Through this Vaux met his wife Mary Swan McEntee marrying her soon after.⁹² In 1855, McEntee quit his job to become a painter full-time, splitting his time for the rest of his life between the Kingston Rondout area and New York City. In 1858, McEntee and his wife, Gertrude, officially moved into the 10th Street studio building in New York City,⁹³ where he continued renting a studio for the rest of his career.⁹⁴ The 10th Street studio was a “creative incubator for the second generation of Hudson River School artists.”⁹⁵ It provided not only a home but an exhibition space and exposure for artists. Through the building and his connections to the art world, McEntee became deeply associated with artists like Sanford Gifford, Worthington Whittredge, John Kensett, Eastman Johnson, John Furguson, Bayard Thomas, and of course Calvert Vaux.⁹⁶ He interacted with the social elite, became popular

⁸⁹ Vedder, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School*,. (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 22

⁹⁰Schuyler, *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*. (Cornell University Press, 2012.) 112

⁹¹ *Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 13

⁹² Ibid 9

⁹³ *A Selection of Drawings by Jervis McEntee from the Lockwood DeForest Collection, May 4- May 28, 1976*. (New York: Hirschl and Adler Galleries Inc. 21 East 67 Street New York, 1976.)

⁹⁴ *Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 26

⁹⁵Vedder, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School*,. (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 17

⁹⁶ *A Selection of Drawings by Jervis McEntee from the Lockwood DeForest Collection, May 4- May 28, 1976*. (New York: Hirschl and Adler Galleries Inc. 21 East 67 Street New York, 1976.)

amongst many, people and also received the patronship of James Pinchot,⁹⁷ James A. Suydam, Henry James,⁹⁸ and actor Edwin Booth, who became a close and personal friend.⁹⁹

McEntee suffered from financial distress and moved in with his parents at home in an attempt to save money in Rondout.¹⁰⁰ He had anxieties about his finances and wrote about them often in his diaries.¹⁰¹ McEntee often reached the point where his friends had to assist him with funds or buy his works. In one case in 1868, McEntee and his wife were able to go to Europe with the financial assistance of Gifford. While abroad he was able to visit England, France, Italy, and Switzerland.¹⁰² That trip exposed him to the great masters and European art market, a necessary addition to his education.¹⁰³

Following his trip to Europe, there was a significant change in McEntee's art. Aspects of European styles such as impressionism and Barbizon style, a title popularized by the school it is named for in France. In these changes, he rejected the "truth of nature" that he had embraced in his youth in favor of a new style. This moved him from a literal interpretation of nature to one that was more poetic and spiritual. This reflected his personality and demeanor more in almost a mild form of impressionism.¹⁰⁴ Unlike many of McEntee's contemporaries, he adapted to the styles of Europe and managed to function within the changing tastes of the art market in a way

⁹⁷ Carso, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Between Nature and Industry: Jervis McEntee and Rondout*, (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 40

⁹⁸ *McEntee & Company November 25, 1997, to January 17, 1998*. (New York: Beacon Hill Fine Art. 1997.)

⁹⁹ *Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 32

¹⁰⁰ *Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 13-14

¹⁰¹ Jervis McEntee Diaries. "From 1872 to 1890." Archives for American Art. 2007.

¹⁰² Vedder, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School*,. (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 23

¹⁰³ Schuyler, *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*. (Cornell University Press, 2012.) 115

¹⁰⁴ Vedder, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School*,. (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 29

that many of the Hudson River School were not able to. His career thrived from the 1860s to the mid-1870s.¹⁰⁵

In the 1870s Kingston and Rondout merged into one town,¹⁰⁶ and McEntee continued traveling between Kingston and New York City. Gertrude McEntee died in October 1878 at the age of 44, after being sick for only a week.¹⁰⁷ McEntee never fully recovered from the loss of his wife and became more reserved and melancholy than ever.¹⁰⁸ In 1881, to help deal with his grief, he went out west to visit his sister Lucy. He produced several works of art during that time. In 1888 after Frederic Church's wife, Isabel Church grew ill and was unable to travel with him; Church invited McEntee on a sketching tour of Mexico.¹⁰⁹ The Hudson River School and its style ended in the 1870s but, it was entirely put to rest with the death of Sanford Gifford in 1880.¹¹⁰ The American public grew more accustomed to the tastes of European art with the rise of the Gilded Age and cosmopolitan lifestyles.¹¹¹ It was at this point that these men were given the title of *Hudson River School* intended as a mocking and pejorative term, that has come to describe these men in modern scholarship.

Jervis McEntee died at the age of 63 on February 3, 1891, of Bright's disease after losing his sight.¹¹² He never received the same comprehensive fame as many of his friends or his tutor

¹⁰⁵ Schuyler, *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*. (Cornell University Press, 2012.) 120

¹⁰⁶Carso, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Between Nature and Industry: Jervis McEntee and Rondout*, (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 38

¹⁰⁷ Jervis McEntee Diaries. "From 1872 to 1890." Archives for American Art. 2007.

¹⁰⁸ *A Selection of Drawings by Jervis McEntee from the Lockwood DeForest Collection, May 4- May 28, 1976*. (New York: Hirschl and Adler Galleries Inc. 21 East 67 Street New York, 1976.)

¹⁰⁹*Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 38

¹¹⁰ Schuyler, *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*. (Cornell University Press, 2012.) 124

¹¹¹ Ibid 123

¹¹²*Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 41

Church and remained stuck in their shadows in both life and death. Seemingly predisposed to melancholia in his youth, he regularly suffered from bouts of depression, self-doubt, and loneliness before his death. McEntee was often described as a melancholy quiet person.¹¹³ He suffered from extreme migraines¹¹⁴ that were potentially the result of anxiety. Despite all of this, during his lifetime from 1855 to 1890, he only failed to have his artwork displayed in the Annual Exhibition in 1869 when he was abroad.¹¹⁵ Also by 1860's McEntee, was considered one of the best landscape painters in the country¹¹⁶ and had acquired significantly more fame than his cousin, Julia Dillon, or any woman would have in his position.

The Artists within Context of Each Other and Their Works

Jervis McEntee and Julia Dillon have deep connections to each other as artists of the same period. Despite the fact that they painted very different subjects, they offer an example of what might have happened to the other had their genders been switched. Both of them came from relatively wealthy and well-connected families in their community.¹¹⁷ Two lived in the same town, were only about six years apart in age. Also, since they were related, they probably had remarkably similar childhoods when looking beyond their genders. Dillon was also well-liked by her uncle, James McEntee.¹¹⁸ This led to her spending more time with Jervis McEntee's family than the rest of her siblings. The two cousins also attended the same school, the Universalist

¹¹³Schuyler, *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*. (Cornell University Press, 2012.)110-111

¹¹⁴ Jervis McEntee Diaries. "From 1872 to 1890." Advertisement. Archives for American Art. 2007.

¹¹⁵ *McEntee & Company November 25, 1997, to January 17, 1998*. (New York: Beacon Hill Fine Art. 1997.)

¹¹⁶ *A Selection of Drawings by Jervis McEntee from the Lockwood DeForest Collection, May 4- May 28, 1976*. (New York: Hirschl and Adler Galleries Inc. 21 East 67 Street New York, 1976.)

¹¹⁷ Thing, *Street That Built a City: McEntee's Chestnut Street, Kingston, and the Rise of New York*. (Black Dome Press, 2015). 4 - 9

¹¹⁸Ibid 31

School. This institution strongly advocated for educating women and men, giving the two remarkably similar educations even if they attended the school at different times.¹¹⁹ There was also the potential that both Julia Dillon and Jervis McEntee received their first formal artistic training while at the Clinton Liberal Institute.¹²⁰

The two seemed to have drifted slightly in their early adulthood. Dillon was absent from many of McEntee's early diary entries, excluding Dillon's leaving for Paris the first time and the death of her husband in 1873. From the mid to late 1870s after the passing of McEntee's wife and after Dillon moved into New York City, she appears significantly more in his daily entries.¹²¹ There are multiple accounts of McEntee calling on Dillon, or the opposite, and the two spending time together doing leisurely activities.¹²² Frequently there are entries about McEntee asking for Dillon's opinion on paintings, showing he valued her opinion greatly in both an artistic and general sense.¹²³ The two also shared their failures and successes with each other. In March of 1881 McEntee remarked in his diary about how Dillon's "picture has been rejected by the American Artists and, in the Academy, her Principal picture is badly hung down in the lower row"¹²⁴ a reflection of an earlier entry in which many people disliked McEntee's painting. Dillon's comment was explicitly recorded as being positive.¹²⁵ The two often dined together and were sometimes joined by the Vauxes, as well as other people associated with Hudson River School.¹²⁶

¹¹⁹ Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 1

¹²⁰ Levy, in person interview by author, March 3, 2018

¹²¹ Jervis McEntee Diaries. "From 1872 to 1890." Advertisement. Archives for American Art. 2007.

¹²² Ibid

¹²³ Ibid

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid

¹²⁶ Ibid

The other members of the Hudson River School who were close to McEntee were at the very least aware of Dillon. They frequently called on McEntee in the city¹²⁷ and spent a significant amount of time in Kingston with the extended McEntee family.¹²⁸ The same can be said for Julia Dillon through her relationship with her cousins Calvert and Mary Vaux.¹²⁹ Dillon was exceptionally close with Mary Vaux: her daughter Julia Vaux was named after Dillon. McEntee and Dillon lived very connected lives and, their careers intercepted, but there are still significant differences between the two in their subjects.

Dillon, like her cousin, shared a deep love of nature and the outdoors. Both McEntee and Dillon grew up in a city that became industrialized. Their artwork reflects this, space somewhere between nature and industrialization.¹³⁰ Though the argument of industrialization as an influence of the work was made initially only in regards to McEntee, it applies to both artists. The Delaware and Hudson Canal opened the year that McEntee was born. Both of the branches of the McEntee families had essential ties to the canal through shipping companies. The two artists spent their childhoods in Rondout during the main boom of industrialization in the area as a result of the traffic on the canal. Rondout and Kingston are also situated within the nature and beauty of the Hudson Valley; both artists focused on the beauty of nature and of plant matter in their paintings. This view and drift towards that specific subject is a result of their environments. Dillon in her work was focused mainly on flowers, the realm of gardens and life in the private sphere that she was mostly allowed into at the time as a woman. However, she painted only cut flowers in vases and bowls, often that were made out of glass or clay. A hint at industrialization

¹²⁷Jervis McEntee Diaries. "From 1872 to 1890." Advertisement. Archives for American Art. 2007.

¹²⁸ Ibid

¹²⁹ Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 1

¹³⁰Carso, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Between Nature and Industry: Jervis McEntee and Rondout*, (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 37

in the most likely mass produced objects holding the flowers. McEntee, due to his nature as a landscape artist, painted a variety of trees, shrubs and other more substantial forms of plant life rather than flowers. McEntee drew his inspiration from hiking and his time spent out in the wilderness with his friends. McEntee was able to enter into places where Dillon and other women of the time were less likely to go because sports and the woods at the time were not considered areas for women.

Both artists rarely strayed away from their usual subjects. McEntee is known for painting almost exclusively landscapes.¹³¹ The only time he did not was when he was facing extreme financial strife in 1876 when Edwin Booth commissioned McEntee to paint him in his most famous stage roles in costume.¹³² McEntee also went on the “grand tour” of Europe and as part of his training also most likely copied the works of the grand masters he saw. Dillon, like McEntee, stayed mostly in the realm of painting still lifes and exclusively flowers.¹³³ A majority of her oils were of flowers, and while there is little evidence of it, Dillon did paint other subjects. In her training ,she copied old masters as well as later in her life, though the whereabouts of these paintings is unknown.¹³⁴

McEntee’s style is one that is very melancholic. Even in his early career, painted winter and fall scenes with a muted color palette instead of spring or summer, which are the months he spent in Kingston.¹³⁵ He started with an incredibly realistic interpretation of art when he first

¹³¹ Vedder, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School*,. (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 17

¹³² *Jervis McEntee: Kingston's Artist of the Hudson River School*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2015.) 31

¹³³ Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 22

¹³⁴ Levy, in person interview by author, March 3, 2018. Sanford Levy owns one such painting is of a couple dancing in an extremely impressionistic style that he showed to the artist during the interview.

¹³⁵ Schuyler, *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909*. (Cornell University Press, 2012.) 110

began, taking after those in the first generation of the Hudson River School.¹³⁶ There is an extensive collection of McEntee's original sketches which are owned by the Lockwood DeForest Collection and were shown to the public in their 1976 show.¹³⁷ Here it is clear to see the influence of Durand and the early members of the school in their preaching of *plein air painting* and capturing nature how it was. McEntee and other members of the school traveled out to the wilderness and achieve, as close as they could, what they saw in their sketchbooks. They later used them for their paintings. All of the images that are included were done in pencil and are very detailed, going as far as to depict nicks in the bark and various other things on the forest floor.¹³⁸ One example, the *Beech-Shandaken* (Figure 3)¹³⁹ drawn in 1858, is of a lone tree with some other logs behind it in various states of rotting behind.¹⁴⁰ McEntee showed his attention to details in the dark by shading in portions of the bark, and the faintness of the leaves. He paid extreme detail to the curves and angles of the branches. There are also accounts of McEntee taking note of the colors that he saw to make sure that he captured them correctly later on in his studio.

Throughout his career, McEntee painted with poetic sensibility¹⁴¹ and emotional honesty. He captured beautiful scenes and added a new heightened sense with them. His 1870 painting *Winter Sunset After a Storm* (Figure 4),¹⁴² is a great example.¹⁴³ This image depicts a sunset at the

¹³⁶ *Be Uncool*. (New York: Questroyal Fine Art, LLC, Fall 2017)

¹³⁷ *A Selection of Drawings by Jervis McEntee from the Lockwood DeForest Collection, May 4- May 28, 1976*. (New York: Hirschl and Adler Galleries Inc. 21 East 67 Street New York, 1976.)

¹³⁸ Ibid

¹³⁹ Property of the DeForest Collection

¹⁴⁰ *A Selection of Drawings by Jervis McEntee from the Lockwood DeForest Collection, May 4- May 28, 1976*. (New York: Hirschl and Adler Galleries Inc. 21 East 67 Street New York, 1976.)

¹⁴¹ Vedder, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School*,. (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 13

¹⁴² owned by the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art in their permanent collection

¹⁴³ Lee Vedder, Kerry Carso, and David Schuyler, *Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School*. (Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, the State University of New York at New Paltz, 2015.) 86

edge of a valley with some clusters of trees and plants that are barren in the winter. Using a color palette of mostly, purples, reds, yellows, whites, and black, McEntee shows the peace and calm of the settled snow. The scene is twilight, growing dark, mixing the snow and the mountains mixing in the distance. A beautiful, sublime scene, like most of his other paintings, it is cold and quiet.

Despite his dislike of European styles, his later work has influences of European styles, specifically of the Barbizon school. Named after a school in France characterized by its tonal qualities, muted colors, loose brush strokes and movement towards impressionism.¹⁴⁴ In his acceptance of this European style, his works shifted away from his early influences of his friends, making it something of his own creation then nature the way it was. This was McEntee's impressionism rather than the style of Mary Cassatt and the French Impressionists. McEntee painted *The Yellow Autumn Woods* (Figure 5) a depiction of a wooded trail, painted by McEntee in 1884.¹⁴⁵ A representation of late autumn, the trees are on a sloped hill with the ground covered in leaves. McEntee works in shades of yellow, orange, and brown almost exclusively, playing into his palette and the style he was emulating. The painting is scenery that cannot be pinpointed precisely, and is a creation of McEntee's own experiences in the wilderness around Kingston, playing into his form of Impressionism. Many people have said that his melancholy personality and feelings translated to his art. McEntee never viewed his works as depressing or dark. He chose to see the beauty in the quiet that none of the other artists of the Hudson River School seemed to find in their works.

¹⁴⁴ Vedder, "Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School." In *Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School*,. (Dulles, VA: Integrated Books International, 2015.) 13

¹⁴⁵ Vedder, Carso, and Schuyler, *Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School*. (Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, the State University of New York at New Paltz, 2015.) 101

Julia Dillon's style was always much more impressionistic than her cousin's. She had significantly loose brush strokes, uses bright pastel colors for all of her flowers and utilized extensive detail to make the flowers recognizable. She was also known to use pastels in the 1880's to depict her works as well.¹⁴⁶ One of the more rare examples of her pastels is located at the Ulster Historical Society's Museums Bevier House, in their Victorian style room.¹⁴⁷ The painting itself is of a bouquet of bright pink roses in a dark blue vase and called simply *Roses in a Pottery Vase* (Figure 6). The roses in the vase appear to be some form of *Rosa Gallica* or *Rosa Carolina*, pink petals with opened yellow centers. This showed that Dillon knew her flowers and their details. Layering and blending of various shades of pink, yellow and orange make this painting memorable. There is a distinct emphasis on the shadows of the flowers, designs on the bottom of the vase itself, and separating the surface of what the vase is resting on with the light grey background.

Julia Dillon never really changed her overall style and subjects even after she returned home to Kingston.¹⁴⁸ All of her paintings are of various flowers in a basket or vase against a monochromatic background. Another example of her works is one of the paintings at Historic Huguenot Street, known as *Flowers in Classical Urn* (Figure 7).¹⁴⁹ The details in the urn are precise and accentuated by gold accents and designs. They are a clear example that Dillon understands the Neoclassical influences of her age. The flowers are small splotches of blue and purple, a bit messy in style and harder to identify than those of many of her other works. The surface that the urn and the flowers spilling out of it are resting on blend together in the

¹⁴⁶ Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 7

¹⁴⁷ Ibid 10

¹⁴⁸ Ibid 10

¹⁴⁹ Ibid 24

background, making it a bit hard to tell where one begins and ends. *Flowers in Classical Urn* is one of her earlier oil paintings.

Dillon's paintings are not dated, making it hard to know precisely when they were made. However, the improvement in her work, complexity in style, and changes in her brush strokes give a general timeline as her talents developed.¹⁵⁰ There is also more of a focus on shading, the specificity of the flowers, and the advancement of the use of lighting as she continued her artistic training,¹⁵¹ best shown in one of her most detailed paintings, *Morning Glories* (Figure 8).¹⁵² This painting won Dillon a prize at the 1892 World Columbian Exhibition in Chicago.¹⁵³ It was in her possession, hanging in 109 Pearl Street until her death. *Morning Glories* came into the possessions of Lillie Brown and was acquired by the Old Dutch Church after her death.¹⁵⁴ It is still hanging in the church's personal archives today. The painting is of a group of lavender, dark blue, and light pink morning glories in a glass vase and are prominently displayed on a table or ledge. There is an extensive amount of detail paid to the leaves in the vase, as well as the inside of the flowers. This painting plays with light in a way that the other two do not. The light appears to be directly manipulated, shining directly on the exposed side of the vase and casting a shadow behind the display. *Morning Glories* was made later in her career due to its preciseness detail and how identifiable the flowers in the vase are.

There is a significant difference in the value of the paintings by the cousins as well. In 1875, at an auction for the Academy of Design, McEntee sold his painting '*Dark Days*' for \$210

¹⁵⁰ Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 4

¹⁵¹ Ibid 13

¹⁵² Ibid 9

¹⁵³ Ibid 13

¹⁵⁴ Ibid 19

at the higher end of the price range, with the highest being at \$225 and the lowest being for \$8.¹⁵⁵ Later in 1876 at the Miner Gallery, McEntee sold one of his landscape paintings ‘*Autumn Morning*’ for \$125, falling right in the middle of the paintings with most of them being somewhere between \$70 to \$220 except the most expensive being listed as a Bierstadt which sold for \$1,100, a massive outlier in the sales.¹⁵⁶ In fall of 2017, Questroyal, an art auction house, put McEntee’s *View Facing the Catskill Mountains* up for auction.¹⁵⁷ On Sotheby's auction site Jervis McEntee paintings go from about \$4,375 to \$70,000¹⁵⁸ and continue going up in value. His works are also housed in larger scale museums such as the Metropolitan Museum in New York City.

In contrast to McEntee, all of the announcements of the sales of Dillon’s paintings in the newspapers include no price, such as in 1880 when she sold her painting “Peonies” through the Academy of Design.¹⁵⁹ Dillon, however, did not rely on her paintings as her source of income, unlike McEntee.¹⁶⁰ However, due to her gender as well as her subjects it can be assumed that Dillon charged and made much less on the art market than many of her male contemporaries. Jerkinstown antiques came across numerous of Dillon’s paintings, and sold them for about \$25,000 at the maximum.¹⁶¹ Many of Julia Dillon’s paintings are still in the Hudson Valley or are owned by private collectors and are in local house museums such as the Ulster County Historical Society’s Bevier House, the Deyo House on Historic Huguenot Street in New Paltz, and in the

¹⁵⁵ "The National Academy of Design." *The New York Herald*, December 22, 1875. Accessed March 4, 2018.

¹⁵⁶ "Sale of Paintings ." *The New York Herald*, June 2, 1876. Accessed March 4, 2018.

¹⁵⁷ *Be Uncool*. (New York: Questroyal Fine Art, LLC, Fall 2017)

¹⁵⁸ "Jervis McEntee." Sotheby's. 2018.

¹⁵⁹ "Pictures Sold at the Academy ." *New York Tribune*, April 15, 1880. Accessed March 4, 2018.

¹⁶⁰ Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.) 4

¹⁶¹ Levy, in person interview by author, March 3, 2018

Old Dutch Church in Kingston. With the similarities and differences between the two, they are both great examples of artists in their period.

Scholarship On The Two Artists

McEntee, at this point, has been better studied by scholars than Dillon. His association with the Hudson River school and diary makes him more appealing to scholars than Dillon. While McEntee is an essential part of the Hudson River School, Dillon is a subversion of typical narratives of femininity is worth studying as well. There is an assertion that because women paint flowers, they are lesser artists than men and therefore should be relegated to that position of continuing to paint flowers because they are a women's subject.¹⁶² Women began being tied to flowers in the middle ages,¹⁶³ and it reached the point where it seemed "the natural inclination of the greater number of ladies who turn their attention to art in an amateur way, seem to tend towards flower painting."¹⁶⁴ Even Lily Martin Spencer played into the idea of flowers being associated with femininity and womanhood in her paintings.¹⁶⁵ However, Julia Dillon loved flowers, becoming a part of the Garden Club and publishing *The Old Gardens of Kingston* in which she described numerous flowers and gardens in detail.¹⁶⁶ Dillon is similar to Lily Martin Spencer in this way.

Lilly Martin Spencer was an artist who painted in the post-Civil War period and was a contemporary of Dillon and McEntee, known on a larger scale than both of them. Most famous

¹⁶² Hatt, and Klonk. *Art History: A Critical Introduction to Its Methods*. (Manchester University Press, 2006), 153

¹⁶³ Stott, "Floral Femininity: A Pictorial Definition." *American Art* 6, no. 2 (1992): 61

¹⁶⁴ Ibid 74

¹⁶⁵ Ibid 68

¹⁶⁶ Julia McEntee Dillon, *Old Gardens of Kingston*. (New York: Ulster County Garden Club, 1915).

for her genre paintings,¹⁶⁷ Spencer started painting when she was 18 and continued to do so until her death in 1902.¹⁶⁸ Spencer acts a bit as a foil to Dillon in that she used her paintings as a source of income for her family, but both faced issues of a lack of mobility in a literal sense and in subject matter in a market dominated by men.¹⁶⁹ She met many similar problems to Dillon in the art world that affected all women such as the issue of men's only social clubs and being unable to interact with the elite because of it, relegated to hand coloring photographs, illustrations, and portraits in hard times.

Lilly Martin Spencer plays into the ideas of stereotypical femininity and subverts it by using it to her advantage. Even though her work was later seen by many male critics as too sentimental, she worked within the notions of middle-class domesticity, asserting a female viewpoint for a male-driven culture.¹⁷⁰ In choosing her topic, "she never publicly openly appeared to compete with men."¹⁷¹ Dillon in her focus on still lifes, and a favorite topic of flowers within the genre, attempts to do the same thing to maintain her prestige and avoid competing in the part of the market that she knew she could not compete in. A contemporary of female artists Mary Cassatt and Lilly Martin Spencer, all these women are examples of the subversion of the patriarchal restraints of the art world. Dillon had financial freedom due to her business, she had the connections of McEntee, and she did not have a husband or kids to relegate

¹⁶⁷ Wierich, "War Spirit at Home: Lilly Martin Spencer, Domestic Painting, and Artistic Hierarchy." *Winterthur Portfolio* 37, no. 1 (2002): 25

¹⁶⁸ Elsie F. Freivogel, "Lilly Martin Spencer." *Archives of American Art Journal* 12, no. 4 (1972): 9

¹⁶⁹ Freivogel, "Lilly Martin Spencer." *Archives of American Art Journal* 12, no. 4 (1972): 10

¹⁷⁰ Wierich, "War Spirit at Home: Lilly Martin Spencer, Domestic Painting, and Artistic Hierarchy." *Winterthur Portfolio* 37, no. 1 (2002): 26

¹⁷¹ *Ibid* 25

her to a life at home. Dillon was able to have her own career and develop throughout her life as an artist.¹⁷²

However, there is still the problem of exposure for the two artists. Jervis McEntee has been a part of many larger and well known exhibits on the Hudson River School, a featured part of shows about artists like Church, Gifford, Kensett, and Whitterage. It wasn't until Fall of 2015 that McEntee had his own show, though in a very small regional gallery, at the Dorsky Museum at the State University of New York at New Paltz.¹⁷³ The show managed to display many of McEntee's paintings from local areas, different museums, and even private collections.¹⁷⁴ Due to the lack of popularity compared to the other members of the school, many of McEntee's paintings ended spread out among various collectors and museums. His diaries up until fairly recently have been used for similar studies into other members of the Hudson River School and life in late 19th century America. McEntee is just beginning to be brought into academic study as he grows popular again. In the past few years, more essays and papers about him based on his diaries have begun to be circulated in academia.

There have been only two small solo shows about Julia Dillon, both in the Hudson Valley, the first hosted by the Bevier House and the Ulster Historical Society and the Garden club in the Summer of 1987.¹⁷⁵ There was a total of 40 of her works, oil paintings, watercolors, and pastels, on display for the whole summer and arranged by Katy Tetlow, the daughter of a friend of Julia Dillon, and one of the last people alive at the time to have met the artist.¹⁷⁶ The

¹⁷²Jochen Wierich, "War Spirit at Home: Lilly Martin Spencer, Domestic Painting, and Artistic Hierarchy." *Winterthur Portfolio* 37, no. 1 (2002): 26

¹⁷³Vedder, Carso, and Schuyler, *Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School*. (Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, the State University of New York at New Paltz, 2015.)

¹⁷⁴Ibid

¹⁷⁵Lynn Mulvaney "The Dillon Exhibition a Handsome show." *Ulster County Gazette*, July 1987.

¹⁷⁶Ibid

second and most recent show was held by the Friends of Historic Kingston in their gallery from May to October of 2005. This show was curated by Sanford Levy and Charles Glasner, and focused mainly on her life in Kingston and significance to the community.¹⁷⁷ Otherwise, Dillon remains largely unstudied and ignored by academia. When writing about Jervis McEntee, Julia Dillon is almost never mentioned unless the material comes from the Hudson Valley and Kingston Area. When people write about Julia Dillon, it is always in context to her older male cousin.

Julia Dillon and Jervis McEntee are both talented artists in their own right and deserve to be studied. Jervis McEntee is an essential part of the second generation of the Hudson River School and acts as a crucial transitional artist in the scheme of American art. He moved from the landscapes of the past to the new Impressionist and European styles of painting that gripped the art world in the wake of modern art. Julia Dillon was an interesting subversion of the typical narrative for women at the time, not only making money from her paintings but running her own business and showing agency not expressed by other women through her travels. However, in current scholarship, Dillon seems to be better examined only within Kingston, being hailed as a model citizen over an artist, and McEntee on a much larger scale and in academia on the whole. Within the context of the 19th-century art world, Jervis McEntee was more successful than Julia Dillon but was not necessarily more talented than her.

A lot of the issue is the gender divides of the art world at the time and then later the way the canon of art history has been constructed. Despite Dillon's great appreciation of nature and flowers, she was still relegated to the practice of painting still lifes despite her talents and

¹⁷⁷Levy, *Julia McEntee Dillon*. (Friends of Historic Kingston. Black Dome Press Corp., 2005.)

copying of the old masters. Dillon had many of the same friends and connections as her cousin, but she still was less famous and renowned than him because of her gender. There is no telling how different the lives of the two might have been had Dillon gone against the art market and painted something other than still lifes, or if McEntee also had a steady source of income. It is exceptionally hard to compare these two in talent but when pushed Dillon's work unfortunately does not stand up to that of her cousin. That being said, the reasons why this is need to be remembered and taken into account as well.

Both of these artists deserve the credit for their accomplishments and will continue to be studied and looked at by the larger art historical world. Local artists have always been an intricate and essential part of life all over the world and in American art. These artists provide a sense of history and identity to the people and place that they call home. They offer unique perspectives and ideas in their artwork, which is influenced by where they are from and their formative experiences. It is unfortunate for that very reason that local artists tend not to be looked on with as much prestige as more nationally known artists. They are known within the community and respected that way, but on a larger scale and to the whole public they are rarely as well known. As students of history we have the power to break tradition and make sure artists like Julia Dillon and even Jervis McEntee are studied and get the credit that they rightly deserve.

Figures
Paintings by Jervis McEntee



Figure 2

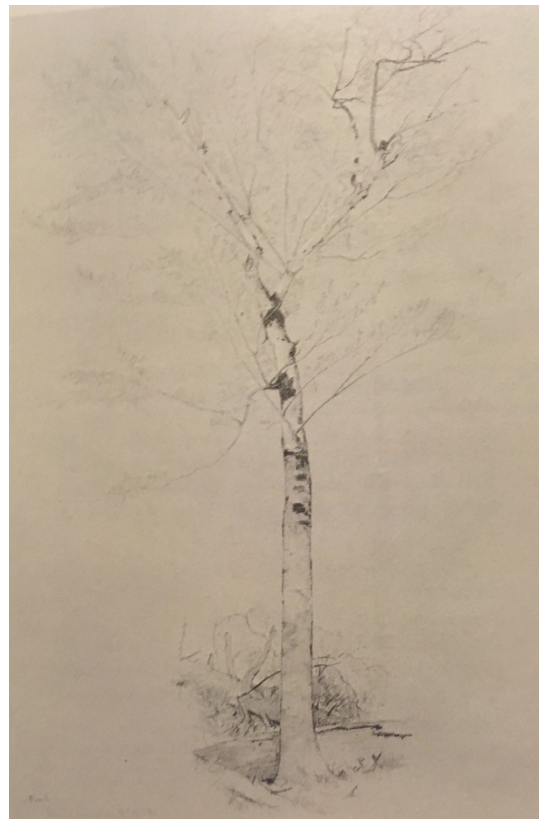


Figure 3

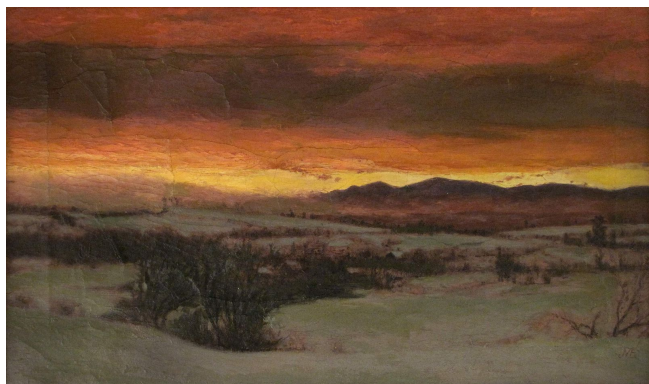


Figure 4



Figure 5

Paintings by Julia Dillon



Figure 1

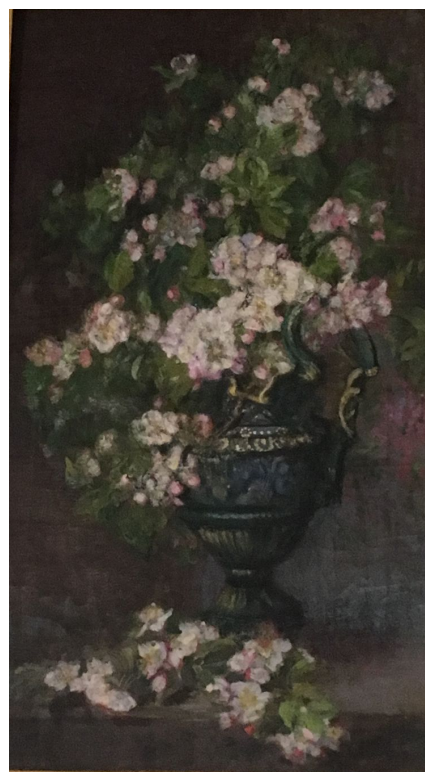


Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

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