



Arthur Sackler examines one of 24 Piranesi drawings he gave to University.

## Avery Gets Piranesi Drawings

Twenty-four original architectural drawings by the Italian architect and engraver Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-78), their existence hitherto unknown, were discovered by University scholars with the help of an art dealer and are now among the collections of Columbia's Avery Architectural Library.

They are the gift to Columbia of Arthur Sackler, the art collector, who presented

them in honor of Avalon Foundation Professor Emeritus in the Humanities Rudolf Wittkower, the eminent art historian who died Oct. 11. In the past year, Dr. Sackler also has given the University hundreds of Piranesi etchings in Professor Wittkower's honor.

The drawings—on two- by three-foot sheets of heavy, yellowed paper—date from 1764; they show in exquisite detail Piranesi's plan, never carried out, for remodeling the ancient Basilica of S. Giovanni in Laterano, in Rome. Before their discovery this summer, it had been thought that the only extant drawings of the S. Giovanni reconstruction were four that are in the Pierpont Morgan Library, in New York.

The new Columbia acquisitions are ink and wash drawings of interior elevations, ornamental details, and a proposed new baldachin-and-altar for the basilica. According to Adolf Placzek, librarian of the Avery-Ware Libraries, "the drawings are both bold and subtle, certainly highly original and imaginative, almost to the point of playfulness."

Mr. Placzek said that "we know very little of Piranesi as a practicing architect," and as for the new drawings, "besides their extraordinary beauty, their scholarly significance in understanding his genius as an architect is of the greatest importance."

The drawings will be part of a comprehensive exhibition of the University's Piranesi holdings to be mounted next March.

Both Dr. Sackler, the donor, and his wife are members of Columbia's Art History and Archaeology Council.

understanding East Central Europe will be held Dec. 3-5 at the School of International Affairs. Distinguished Eastern and Western European scholars, American scholars, and government officials will participate in the conference, which is being organized by Professor Peter C. Ludz of the department of Political Science, University of Bielefeld, West Germany, and Vojtech Mastny, assistant professor of history at Columbia. The sponsors are Columbia's Institute on East Central Europe and a committee of nine eminent European and American specialists.

### Who Dusts Them?

Director of University Libraries Warren J. Haas has announced that in 1970-71 the Libraries added 138,874 volumes to their cataloged collections: 12,766 volumes were withdrawn, and so there was a net increase of 126,108 books. Total of volumes in cataloged collections: 4,241,130. In addition, the collections number 924,072 microform units, more than 4.5 million MSS, and 150,000 maps.