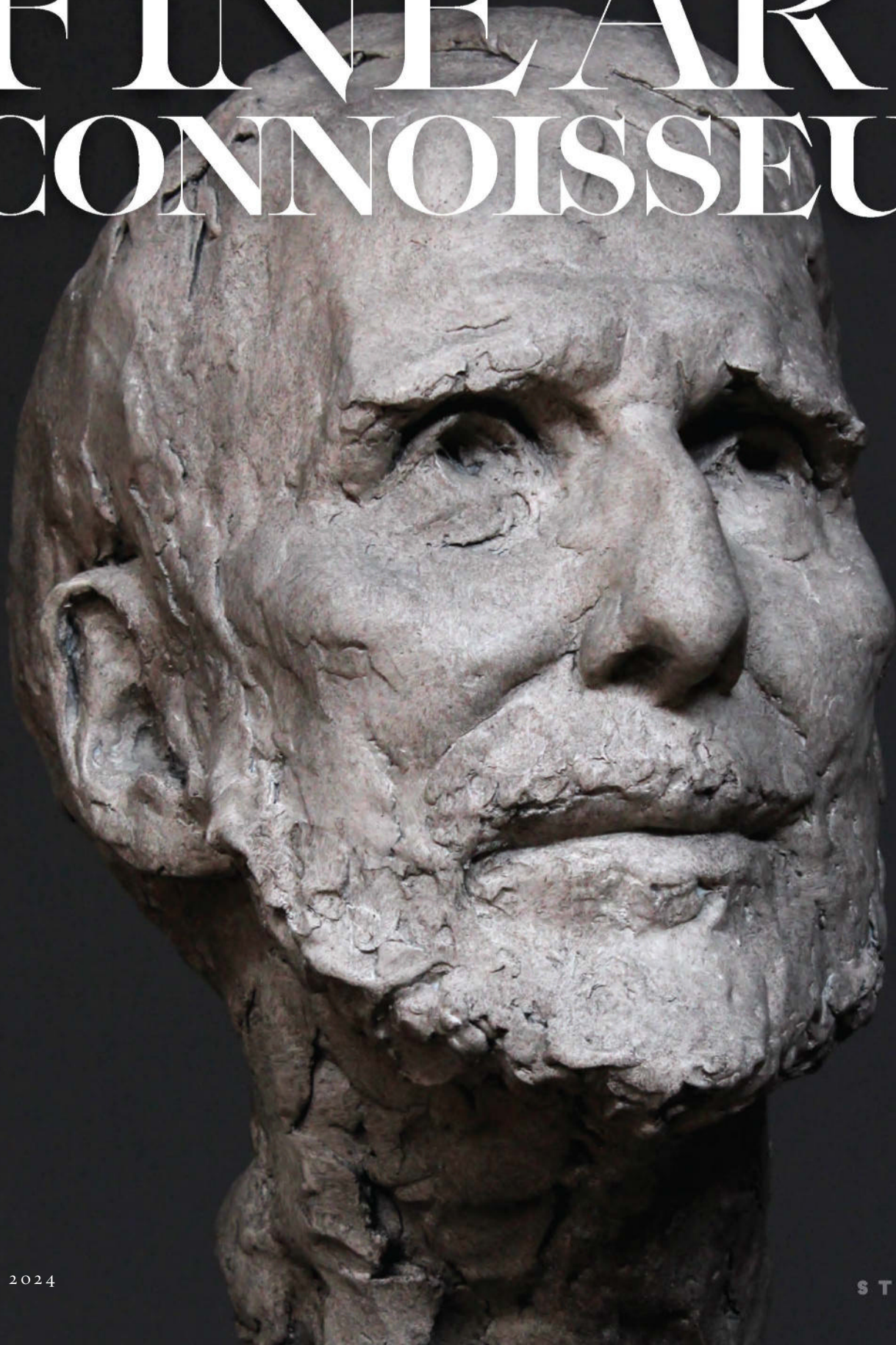


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Melinda Littlejohn



Brett Allen Johnson

Melinda Littlejohn
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\$1,200, draw sale

Brett Allen Johnson
Above the River
oil on canvas board
12 x 16 in.
\$4,200, draw sale

Patrick McGrath Muñiz
Epiphany
oil and metal leaf on panel
33 x 19 in.
\$6,200, draw sale



Patrick McGrath Muñiz

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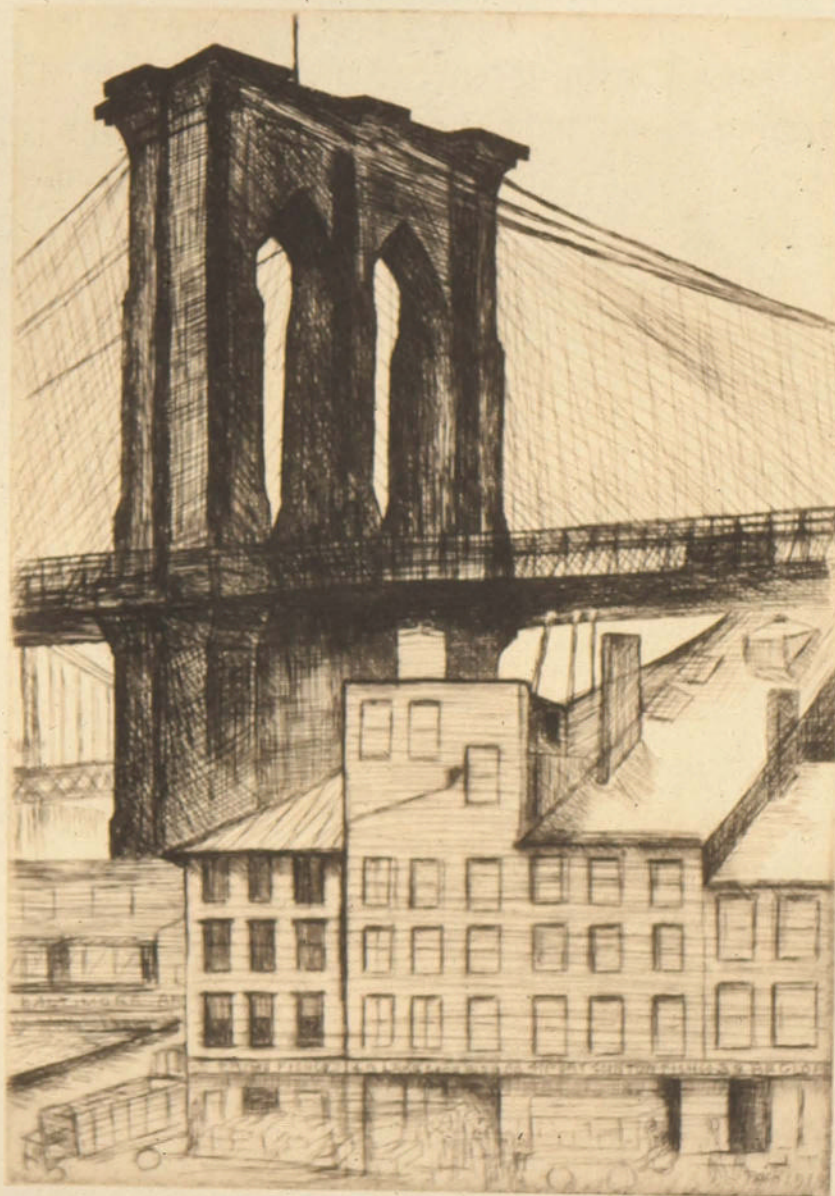
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Walter Pach (1883–1958), *Brooklyn Bridge*, 1919, etching on paper, 7 x 4 4/5 in., Stanley Museum of Art, Iowa City, gift of Alan and Ann January. On view through December in the exhibition *A Year in Print* at the Stanley Museum of Art (University of Iowa, stanleymuseum.uiowa.edu).

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— Walter Pach (artist, critic, scholar), 1922



Kim Middleton, Signature
 "Old and New, Orange and Blue" 20 x 24 Oil



Jane Hunt, Master
 "Western Grove" 36 x 24 Oil



Diana Reuter-Twining, Associate
 "The Fox's Prophecy" 28 x 13 x 5 Bronze



Julie Gowing Hayes, Signature Emeritus
 "Three Graces, Trumpeter Swans" 40 x 30 Oil



Terri Wagner, Associate
"Quiet Walker" 30 x 40 Oil



Addren Doss, Master
"Little King" 16 x 20 Oil



Dana Lombardo, Signature
"She Who Walks in the Sun" 36 x 24 Oil

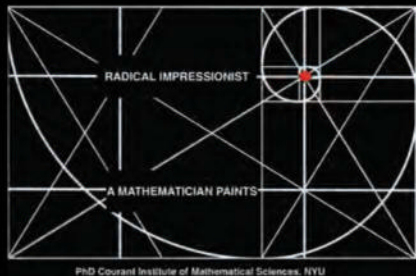
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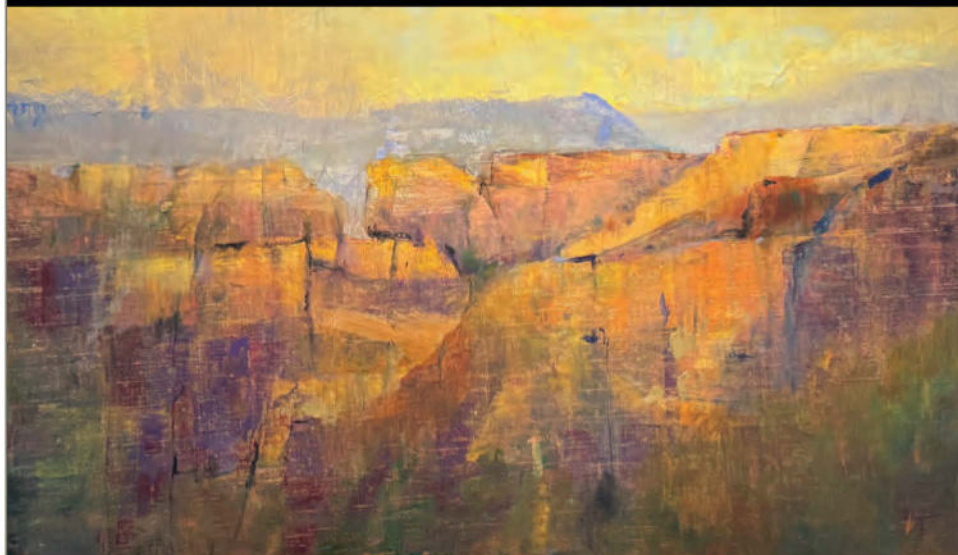


Susan Temple Neumann, Associate
"Sunset Warrior" 20 x 24 Oil



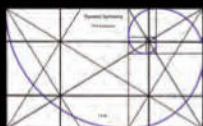
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A Mathematician Paints



Turbulent Lands, 15x25, oil
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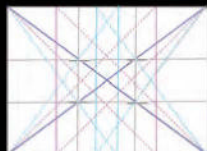
Armatures and Golden Mean Fibonacci Spirals
I design my paintings based on armatures used by artists over the centuries.



Land Abstraction I, 8x13



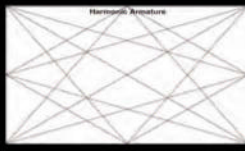
Land Abstraction II, 8x16 (sold)



Black Mesa 12x16, oil



Turbulent Lands, 15x25, oil



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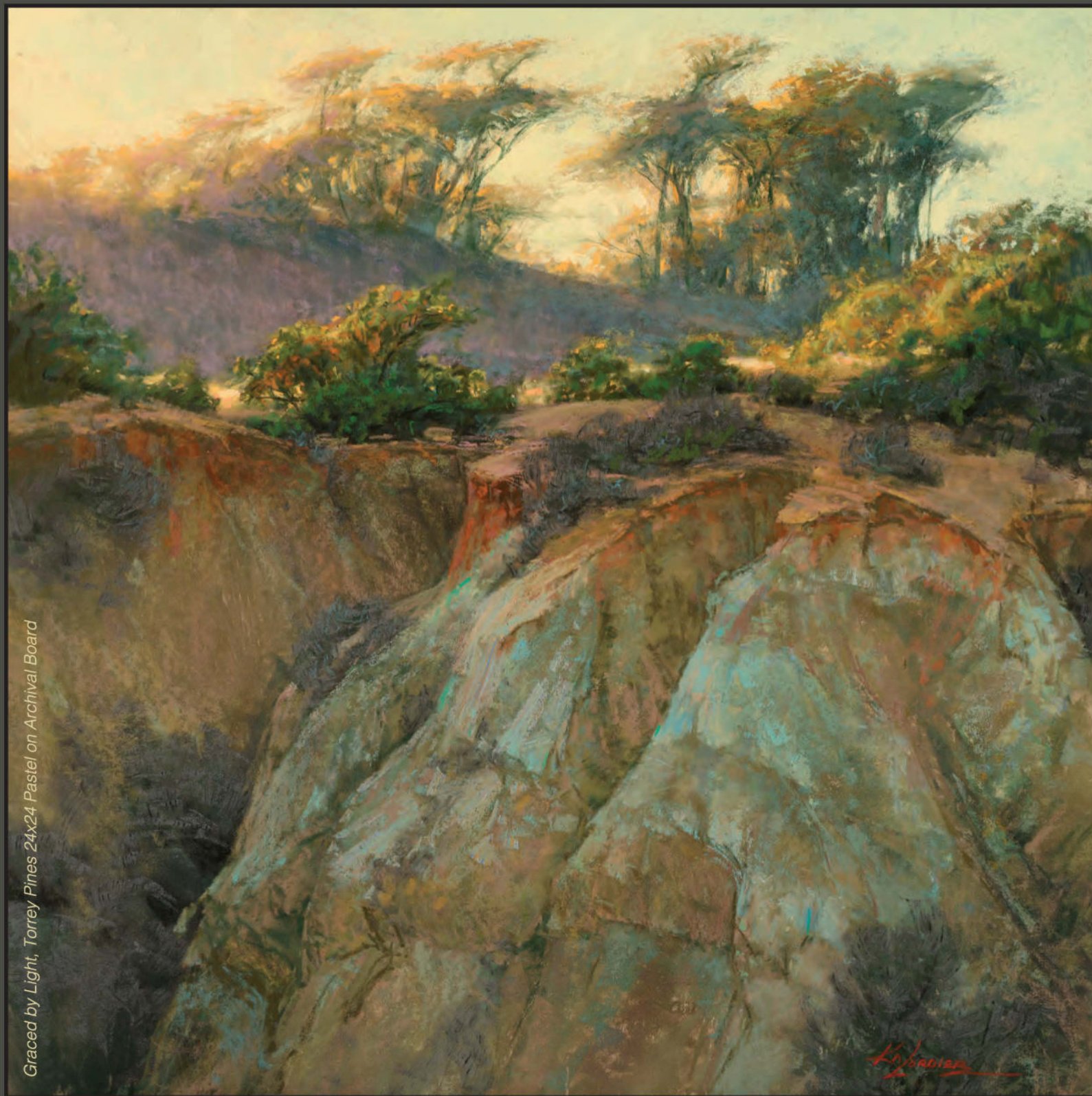
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Graced by Light, Torrey Pines 24x24 Pastel on Archival Board

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JOHANNE MANGI



Berner Joy, 24 x 36, oil on linen

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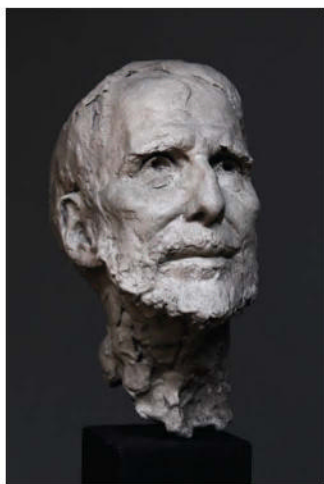
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DAVID MARTY



Cows in the Meadow, 20 x 30", oil on canvas



Friends, 18 x 24", oil on canvas



Reaching Higher, 16 x 20", oil on canvas

KNOWING WHEN ART IS GOOD

How can I know what's good?" asks a friend who has recently grown fascinated by the idea of collecting art. "I know what I like, but what if it isn't good?"

His question stirs a valid debate because each collector has distinctive objectives. For most, there is the passion for art and the need to be surrounded by it. For others, it's about filling their homes with pieces that impress visitors. Still others want a hedge against inflation, something that rises in value as currency falls. In all these cases, the best thing a collector can acquire is the ability to assess an artwork's quality.

Today I shudder to recall what I loved at age 20, and I'm thankful I did not get it tattooed on my arm because my taste has evolved since then. Indeed, my evolution is ongoing; there are paintings I collected early on that no longer please me now. Fortunately, someone else will find those pieces wonderful, as I once did, and so I deaccession some from time to time. Though all of my artworks bring me at least some joy, I'd rather see the less loved ones in a new owner's home than stored away in mine.

So what guidance should I give my collector friend? First, he must seek art he loves and responds to emotionally. While some collectors rely on others to make the decisions (like dealers, advisers, or decorators,

which is perfectly fine), each collector should ultimately love the things surrounding him or her. Yet love alone does not mean it's "good." For example, I have visited mansions filled with well-loved prints that I consider commercial or even kitsch. (I don't mean to be a snob, because, frankly, I started with commercial things, too.)

Happily, my friend already has a good eye and has purchased some fine works from a dealer who offers only the best. Just like artists and artworks, not all galleries are created equal; they cover the whole spectrum. And though price is not always an indicator of quality, it certainly says something about demand for the artist, and suggests that he or she has a loyal following. I have told my friend to visit museums frequently and identify the artists he responds to, then read those artists' monographs (art-speak for biographies). Though some museum curators follow the fads, most are solidly grounded in connoisseurship, so it makes sense for a new collector to watch what they are exhibiting.

Taste, I suppose, is a function of age and upbringing. Loud, garish colors and striking subjects attracted me earlier in life, but now the opposite is true. But exposure plays a key role as well: I've met people who were exposed to superb art when they were young, and that certainly helped them start collecting on a higher level right off the bat. That's one reason I expose my own children to



Painted by
JOHN HOWARD SANDEN (1935–2022)
Publisher B. Eric Rhoads
2015, oil on canvas, 30 x 24 in.

museums and quality art whenever possible. Though they will eventually chart their own course, there is no substitute for a solid base.

I have also reminded my friend that art collecting is a journey, not a destination. In his case, historical masterworks are not affordable, so he is doubly fortunate to live at a time when younger "post-contemporary" artists are making outstanding representational works, often as good as the Old Masters'. These works are already growing in value, and many will surely be considered significant in future years.

At the end of the day, my friend should follow his own muse and buy what most pleases him. The journeys of discovery, and of self-discovery, are truly wonderful and well worth the effort.

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A CHANGING ART MARKET



Recently I have been reviewing this magazine's back issues, and I am struck by how often — before the pandemic — we covered record-breaking prices obtained at auction for masterworks by the likes of Pablo Picasso, Mark Rothko, and Lucian Freud. We're talking \$150 million here, \$100 million there.

I have not noticed until now how significantly those stories have faded. Occasionally we learn through the art press that a certain billionaire or oligarch has acquired one of these masterworks, but their sales are now conducted privately rather than in public auctions, though still most likely via Sotheby's or Christie's in New York City. There is nothing illegal about this, but it does make the auction scene less exciting and visible than it once was.

More importantly, it means that auction catalogues, in most departments, are getting thinner. Staffs are being pruned, too, often with the experts being reassigned to the "private sale" divisions, where they essentially become high-end bank officers who happen to know a lot about art. Again, none of this is illegal, yet it erodes the visibility of art collecting nationwide, especially to the upper middle class that has historically sustained the art market. Those were folks who had some cash to burn and some homes to decorate, who spent weekend afternoons prowling the showrooms looking for \$50,000 paintings to acquire the following week at auction.

As Sotheby's and Christie's have shed this function, much of the slack has been taken up by such regional auctioneers as Freeman's (Philadelphia) and Hindman (Chicago) who,

no surprise, have just merged. Now there are excellent auctioneers nationwide handling artworks that the "big boys" no longer bother with, and that's fine, but the media is not interested in covering middling sale prices fetched in cities that are not particularly glamorous.

One result is that art collecting now strikes many middle-class Americans as even more exclusive — and less accessible — than ever before. We should particularly be concerned about people under 40 who have no history of buying "real" art and are now looking to adorn their first proper home. They are reading less about art in the media, and they may not have noticed that storefront art galleries are disappearing in many communities due to the difficulties that all retailers face in getting foot traffic. Art collecting, then, may not strike them as a viable pursuit, or perhaps the only option visible is to buy what the British call "cheap and cheerful" — contemporary art made by students or folks selling it at festivals.

The readers of *Fine Art Connoisseur* know better. We realize that galleries, auction houses, and artist's studios nationwide are still out there, full of fascinating artworks that "real" people can afford. But not everyone reads *Fine Art Connoisseur* (yet), so let's all spread the word, please. Visiting your local art museum regularly is a great way to train the eye, just one reason this magazine highlights exhibitions you should see.

Do get out there and look as widely as you can — at museums, and also in your region's galleries and auction houses. The more you see, the more likely you will fall in love with something you must bring home.

KRIS LEWIS



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2024 COLLECTOR'S GUIDE TO CHARLESTON AND SANTA FE



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Aimee Erickson, *Lemons, Limes and Spider Mums* (detail), oil, 18 x 24 in.



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"Bass Players" | 36 x 36 in., oil



DAUD AKHRIEV (OPA MASTER)
"Almost Through" | 31.5 x 31.5 in., oil



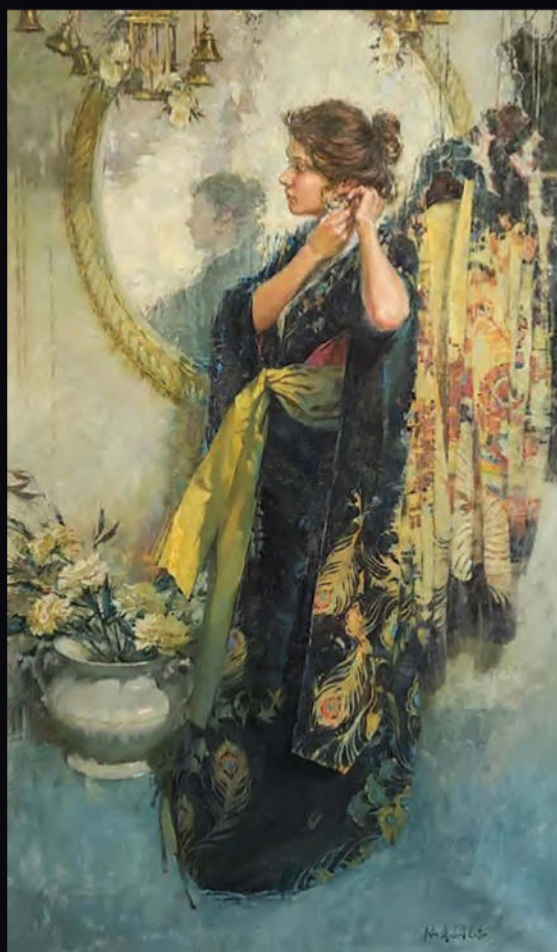
RICK REINERT
 "Courtyard Nocturne" | 48 x 36 in., oil



KIRK MCBRIDE
 "Above The Dunes" | 60 x 48 in., oil



JAMES SWANSON
 "Water Dog In The Lillies" | 16 x 20 in., oil



JOHN MICHAEL CARTER (OPA MASTER)
 "Arrangement In Black & Yellow" | 60 x 36 in., oil

A Tale of Two Art Meccas



CHARLESTON, SC



SANTA FE, NM

Photo of Charleston by f11photo/Shutterstock.com
Photo of Santa Fe by Sean Pavone/Shutterstock.com

Dear Fellow Art Lover,

Part of the fun of admiring and acquiring art is visiting the wonderful places where it is made and sold. This season, as most Americans' holidaying gets underway, we are pleased to highlight two standout art destinations: Charleston, South Carolina, and Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Both cities are among America's oldest, yet both are experiencing thrilling new bursts of energy in every category. Their populations are growing (though not overly so), and so the range of artistic endeavors pursued there has broadened accordingly. Both offer a delightful mix of excellence, diversity, and laid-back charm. The art available ranges across periods — from the 18th century right through last week — and there is always someone interesting to chat with. Your coffee barista may be a folk musician, and the receptionist at the gallery an up-and-coming artist.

Particularly intriguing is the cheek-by-jowl flourishing of artforms drawn from different cultural legacies. In Charleston we see the legacy of the British who settled the region in the 17th century — and thus lots of colonial and colonial-revival antiques — and also

that of Gullah people, descendants of the enslaved Africans who worked the British-owned plantations along the coast. With its impressive harbor, Charleston is also a major destination for sailors of various kinds, so expect to see marine art in all its forms.

Santa Fe, by contrast, features the side-by-side flourishing of the Native American, Hispanic, and "Western" legacies (the latter encompasses both European-American and the American West). It's particularly exciting for visitors to take a side trip to a Native pueblo (e.g., Tesuque, Acoma, Taos) or a historically Hispanic town (like Madrid or Chimayo) to see where some of these artforms originated.

There's also a level playing field among the fine and decorative arts in Santa Fe and Charleston: great jewelry, textiles, ceramics, metalwork, and ethnographic artifacts are prized just as much as paintings, sculpture, and works on paper. Practitioners in these artforms see and respect each other, and much creativity has flowed from their encounters.

In both cities, there's a familiarity among non-experts with the great artistic talents of previous

generations: in New Mexico, you'll be struck by how many people know about the Taos Society of Artists a century ago, or in Charleston the early 20th-century leaders of the so-called Charleston Renaissance. Locals are especially familiar with more recent artistic greats and probably can tell you about the time they waited at a bus stop with one of them.

It's a truism that art galleries like to set up shop in the same neighborhoods because their clients can stroll from one to the next and discover something new. Literally, it's the more, the merrier. Santa Fe boasts three lively gallery districts (near the Plaza downtown, Canyon Road, and the Railyard), while Charleston's focal points are King Street, Gallery Row on Broad Street, and the French Quarter. Exploring these enchanted places is part of the aesthetic adventure: it's not just art on the walls, but also the evocative architecture and intriguing lifestyles all around you.

Enjoy your visits there, and please tell us what you discovered.

Peter Trippi, editor-in-chief,
Fine Art Connoisseur

DOUGLAS FRYER



"AUGUST" OIL, 10 X 10"

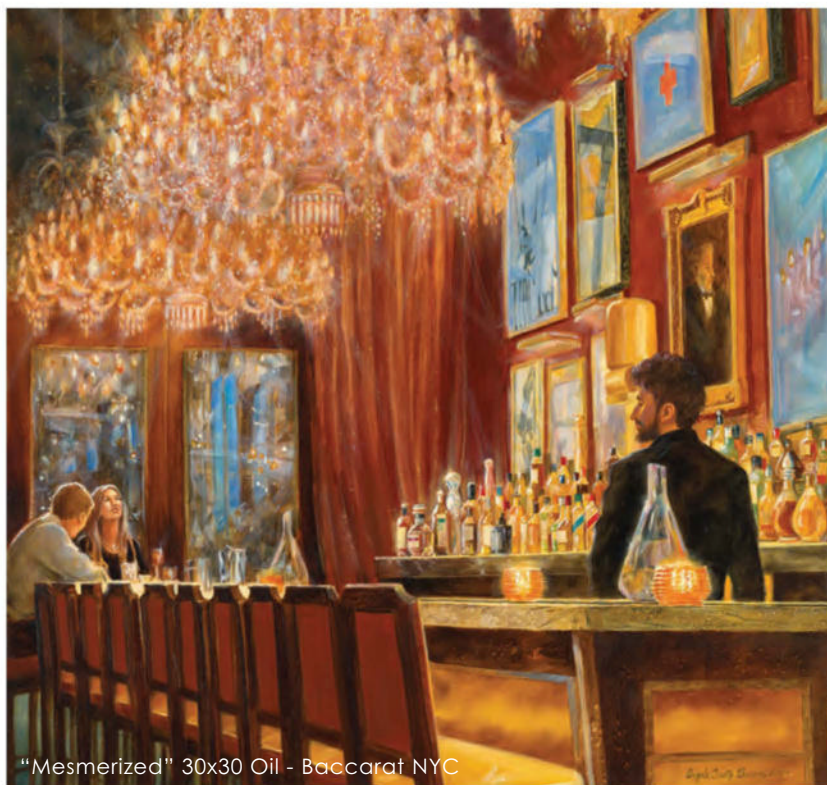
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chaas@streamlinepublishing.com

ON THE COVER

Aimee Erickson
Lemons, Limes and Spider Mums (detail), oil, 18 x 24 in.
Available at Meyer Gallery, Santa Fe, NM.
Aimee Erickson is also represented by
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First Snow of October, 24 x 30, Oil on Belgian Linen

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American Impressionist Society "Impressions" Small Works Showcase | Anderson Fine Art Gallery | St. Simons, GA | April 25 - May 28, 2024

Oil Painters of America National Exhibition | Mark Arts | Wichita, KS | April 5 - May 31, 2024

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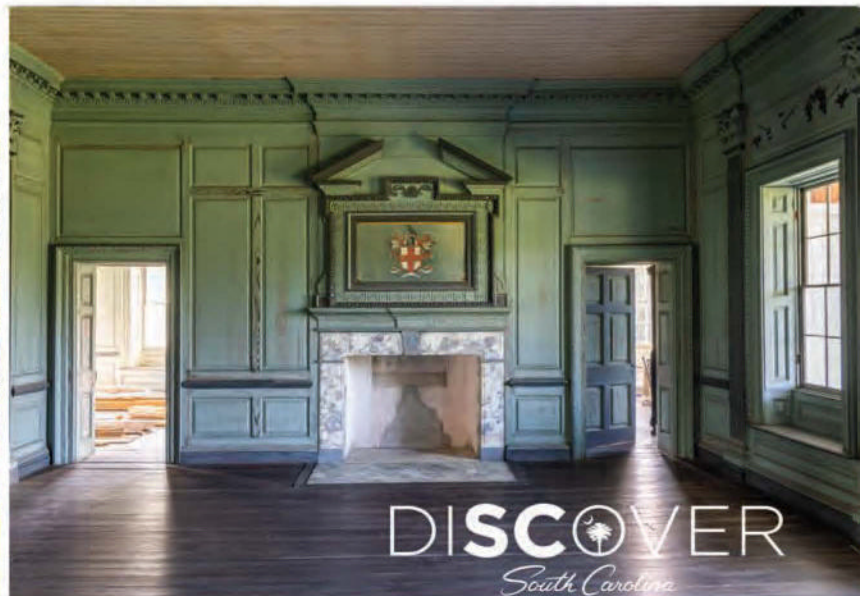
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SANTA FE: INSPIRING BEAUTY, INDOORS AND OUT



Photo courtesy of Gina Ward

In a world where we must usually choose between destinations of natural beauty or cultural riches, the city of Santa Fe in northern New Mexico offers that rarest of luxuries — having it both ways.

Located 7,200 feet above sea level, this community of 88,000 residents is set in a high desert landscape of wildflowers, sagebrush, and juniper pine. Driving northward out of Santa Fe through canyons and mesas, or hiking in nearby foothills and mountains, visitors are virtually guaranteed a dose of clear, intense light and vast blue sky with scudding white clouds, punctuated by the occasional sharp, short thunderstorm. Dotting the surrounding landscape are imposing Indian pueblos and tawny adobe churches that have long withstood the climate's extreme heat and cold.

Settled by Native Americans long ago, the region was colonized

— barely — by Spaniards venturing northward from Mexico City in the early 1600s. The flag of newly independent Mexico was raised here in 1821 but replaced by Old Glory in 1848, and New Mexico did not achieve U.S. statehood until 1912. Thus the city is adorned with handsome buildings that reflect its multicultural history, including some grander “Pueblo Revival” buildings erected by the beloved local architect John Gaw Meem (1894–1983).

Even a quick drive around Santa Fe suggests why its motto is “The City Different,” and why UNESCO added it to the relatively small Creative Cities Network. Beyond the counterculture legacy it cherishes, Santa Fe is highly focused on arts and culture, with more artists, performers, and writers per capita than any other U.S. city. Every season features festivals

celebrating various aspects of the visual and performing arts, and the city remains one of America's largest markets for fine art. Although most artists' studios are off-limits, you can be sure artists are all around you, absorbing the city's funky vibes and channeling it into their own creations.

Few visitors have enough energy to hit all of Santa Fe's hundreds of commercial galleries. Planning your itinerary is aided by visiting the website of the Santa Fe Gallery Association (santafegalleryassociation.org), which on July 11 will kick off the city's popular ArtWeek with a festive party. (Watch its website for details.)

ABOVE: Sagebrush and billowing cloudscapes can be found all around Santa Fe

RIGHT: A quintessential scene in Santa Fe



DOWNTOWN

Summer is when the city really hops artistically. Its biggest event is the renowned Indian Market, organized by the Southwestern Association for Indian Arts (swaia.org), which will take over the main plaza again August 17–18. Participating this year will be more than 1,200 artists representing 100 tribal nations selling their work directly to an estimated 100,000 visitors. Smaller but also intriguing is the Atrisco

Heritage Foundation's annual Traditional Spanish Market, to be held on the plaza July 27–28. The city capitalizes on its handsome convention center downtown, where the flagship fair ART Santa Fe (artsantafe.com) will occur July 12–14. And on most days, visitors get an enticing glimpse of local entrepreneurship by strolling past the blankets laid out by Indian artisans under the Portal of the Palace of the Governors, which faces the plaza.

Many visitors begin their artistic adventures downtown near the plaza. Often their first destination is the New Mexico Museum of Art (nmartmuseum.org), which has two buildings of rotating exhibitions and fascinating displays that blend Native, Hispanic, and European-American works from the collection to provide an intercultural history of the state. The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum (okeeffemuseum.org) nearby is very popular, so consider booking your tickets in advance. On



Photo courtesy of Gina Ward

view this season is the exhibition *Rooted in Place*, which highlights the studies of trees she made throughout her life, from New Mexico to the Caribbean.

The world-renowned artist (1887–1986) first visited New Mexico in 1917 on a holiday from her native Texas. “If you ever go to New Mexico,” she noted, “it will itch you for the rest of your life,” and indeed much of her work after 1929, and all of it after 1949, was made here. Since opening in 1997, the museum has earned a global reputation for intriguing contextual exhibitions and its research center devoted to American modernism. O’Keeffe fans should contact the museum to learn about visiting her homes at Ghost Ranch and Abiquiú, an exhilarating drive away.

While downtown, don’t miss the Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, operated by the Institute of American Indian Arts, and also five superb galleries handling primarily historical art: Addison Rowe Gallery (addisonrowe.art), Shiprock (shiprocksanatafe.com), Owings Gallery (owingsgallery.com, in two locations), William R. Talbot Fine Art (williamtalbotfineart.com), and William Siegal Gallery (williamsiegal.com). Six standout galleries dealing in contemporary art here are Hecho a Mano (hechoamano.org, where local artist Kat Kinnick’s paintings of animals staring down our modern dystopia are on view May 3–June 3), Manitou Galleries (manitougalleries.com, which represents Douglas Aagard, Thomas Blackshear, and Jim Eppler), Sorrel Sky Gallery (sorrelsky.com, with Edward Aldrich, Linda Glover Gooch, and Peggy Immel), Sugarman-Peterson Gallery (sugarmanpetersongallery.com,

with Duffy Sheridan, Jane Jones, and Desmond O’Hagan), Victory Contemporary (victorycontemporary.com, with Nicole Finger and Tal Walton), and Worrell Gallery (worrellgallery.com, with Jan DeLipsey, Matthew Higginbotham, William A. Suys, and Bill Worrell himself). If you are downtown on a weekend, find the parking lot where members of the Santa Fe Society of Artists (santafesocietyofartists.com) exhibit their works and happily explain how they were created.

CANYON ROAD

Santa Fe’s largest hub for art remains Canyon Road, which winds along an old Indian trail and is lined with an array of handsome adobe houses, some dating back to the 18th century. The best introduction is attending

its festive open houses, scheduled every Friday evening after work during all but the coldest months. On those evenings, Canyon Road is filled with art lovers strolling in and out of the latest exhibitions and deciding which of Santa Fe’s excellent restaurants to visit later. Scheduled for May 11 is the annual Canyon Road Spring Art Festival (visitcanyonroad.com), showcasing dozens of artists demonstrating their techniques and answering onlookers’ questions.

Among the standouts here handling both contemporary and historical art are Gerald Peters Gallery (gpgallery.com), which is showing recent paintings by Logan Maxwell Hagege (through May 23); and Nedra Matteucci Fine Art (matteucci.com) with its atmospheric gallery building and lush sculpture garden. Among its



Betsy James (b. 1948), *Cities of Gold: Two Pueblos*, 2024, watercolor and gouache on paper, 5 x 5 in., Nedra Matteucci Galleries

finest living artists are William Acheff, Michael Coleman, Terri Kelly Moyers, and Jill Soukup. Historical New Mexico masterworks are available nearby at Zaplin Lampert Gallery (zaplinlampert.com) and Matthews Gallery (thematthewsgallery.com), while superb contemporary art is found at Meyer Gallery (meyergalleries.com), where painter Ken Daggett kicks off the busy season with a show of *Desert Impressions* (May 10–30). At McLarry Fine Art (mclarryfineart.com), painter Kenny McKenna is presenting his *Santa Fe and Beyond* show May 29 – June 12.

Other Canyon Road venues to visit are Acosta-Strong Fine Art (acostastrong.com, with Evelyne Boren and Gregory Frank Harris), Aurelia Gallery (aureliagallery.com, which has

comparatively cutting-edge works by such talents as Daniel Blagg), Canyon Road Contemporary Art (canyoncontemporary.com, with Jeff Faust and Ed Sandoval), Giacobbe-Fritz Fine Art (giacobbefritz.com, with Bruce Cascia, Gail Haire, and Albert Scharf), Globe Fine Art (globefineart.com, with Karen Haynes and Reid Richardson), Legacy Gallery (legacygallery.com, with Russell Case, John Coleman, and Don Oelze), New Concept Gallery (newconceptgallery.com, with Douglas Atwill, Ellen Feinberg, and Woody Galloway), Sage Creek Gallery (sagecreekgallery.com, with Calvin Liang, Zhaoming Wu, and Marilyn Yates), TurnerCarroll (turnercarrollgallery.com, with Calyxte Campe, Davin Linn, and Igor Melnikov), Underwood Gallery (underwoodgallerynm.com, with D. Nelson Barnhill and

Lisa Marie Kindley), Ventana Fine Art (ventanafineart.com, with Doug Dawson and Natasha Isenhour), and Winterowd Fine Art (fineartsantafe.com, with Charlie Burk and Jamie Kirkland).

RAILYARD DISTRICT & MUSEUM HILL

Once sleepy and run down, the Railyard District has — over the past decade — taken on a hip, post-industrial vibe thanks to the influx of galleries and other artistic enterprises. At its heart is the cutting-edge, nonprofit venue SITE Santa Fe (sitesantafe.org) and — as of last year — the Vladem Contemporary, one of the New Mexico Museum of Art's two facilities. On view at the Vladem from June 8 is the intriguing exhibition *Off-Center: New Mexico Art, 1970–2000*, which explores



Ken Daggett (b. 1953), *Autumn Dream* (Diptych), 2020, oil on canvas, 60 x 80 in., Meyer Gallery



Ethel Fisher (1923–2017), *Alice Baber and Paul Jenkins*, 1967, oil on canvas, 51 x 40 in., LewAllen Galleries



Kenny McKenna (b. 1950), *Afternoon Light on a Morning Snow (Canyon Road)*, 2024, oil on linen, 40 x 50 in., McLarry Fine Art

the arrival of artists from across America in such smaller towns as Galisteo, Gallup, Las Cruces, and Roswell. More than 125 artists will be featured during the show's 11-month run. While in the district, visitors should also check out El Museo Cultural de Santa Fe (elmuseocultural.org), which focuses on Hispanic artforms.

Located in the Railyard area are several top-quality venues to see art, including Blue Rain Gallery (blueraingallery.com, with Deladier Almeida, Hyrum Joe, and Mark Pugh), Charlotte Jackson Fine Art (charlottejackson.com, which offers superb abstract works), EVOKE Contemporary

(evokecontemporary.com, with Lynn Boggess, Francis Di Fronzo, and Kristine Poole), LewAllen Galleries (lewallencontemporary.com, showing paintings by the late Ethel Fisher through May 25), and Zane Bennett Contemporary Art (zanebennettgallery.com, with Jim Dine and Carol Mothner).

If you have extra time, spend a day further out of town on Museum Hill, a cultural complex that is home to the Museum of Spanish Colonial Art, Museum of Indian Arts & Culture, Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, and Museum of International Folk Art. On May 4, the latter will host its Folk Art Flea, where bargains are usually found.

PRACTICALITIES

Getting to Santa Fe is now easier than ever, thanks to the Rail Runner Express train line running from Albuquerque's airport northward to Santa Fe Depot. Though the city is well supplied with hotel rooms, consider organizing your trip now in order to get the best room at the best price. Visit the Tourism Santa Fe site (santafe.org) for leads on all sorts of practicalities. Then get ready to experience a unique American destination.

Peter Trippi, editor-in-chief,
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SOUTHERN CHARMS: ART IN CHARLESTON

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Founded in the 17th century with the support of England's King Charles II, the picturesque seaport of Charleston, South Carolina, has long been renowned not only for well-preserved houses, churches, and cobblestone streets, but also for its cultural sophistication. Although it was even more cosmopolitan in the 18th century, when almost every British or American ship trading along the Atlantic coast put in here, today's Charleston offers art galleries, antique shops, and boutiques well worth exploring. Its inns, bed-and-breakfasts, and cafes are admired for hospitality and quality, with most an easy stroll from the city's many historical sites.

Many of the latter are operated by the Historic Charleston Foundation, and knowledgeable guidance can always be obtained through the visitor bureau (charlestoncvb.com).

The most prestigious visual arts institution in town is the Gibbes Museum of Art, opened in 1905 and now possessing more than 10,000 works spanning 350 years, many with a connection to South Carolina or the South generally. The permanent collection is arranged to highlight significant people and themes in Charleston's rich history, including its crucial roles in the American Revolution and Civil War.

This season the Gibbes is celebrating its recent acquisition of an important painting, *The Battery, Charleston, S.C.* by Edward Hopper (1882–1967). In 1929, this now-famous artist and his wife, Jo, spent three weeks in Charleston, where he completed 11 watercolors, including this one. It fits neatly into the Gibbes's superb permanent display about 20th-century American



Edward Hopper (1882–1967), *The Battery, Charleston, S.C.*, 1929, watercolor, chalk, and pencil on paper, 13 7/8 x 19 7/8 in., Gibbes Museum of Art



John Hull (b. 1952), *The Green Lantern*, 2024, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 30 in., Corrigan Gallery

regionalism and the Charleston Renaissance (1915–45), when artists of all kinds flocked here to admire its historic scenery and relatively bohemian atmosphere.

One leader of this “school” was Alfred Hutt (1877–1954), who had already established himself in the art colony of Woodstock, New York, when he discovered Charleston in 1920. Locals claim he wired his wife to say, “Come quickly, have found heaven.” The Huttys then split

their year between the Catskills and Charleston, where the artist celebrated the city’s architecture, rural environs, and residents in various mediums. Other key figures in that period included Alice Ravenel Huger Smith, Anna Heyward Taylor, and Walter W. Thompson. Also on view at the Gibbes this season (May 24–September 15) are recent paintings and watercolors inspired by nature and daily life, created by the Cuban-born, Miami-based artist

Reynier Llanes (b. 1985), who lived in Charleston for six years.

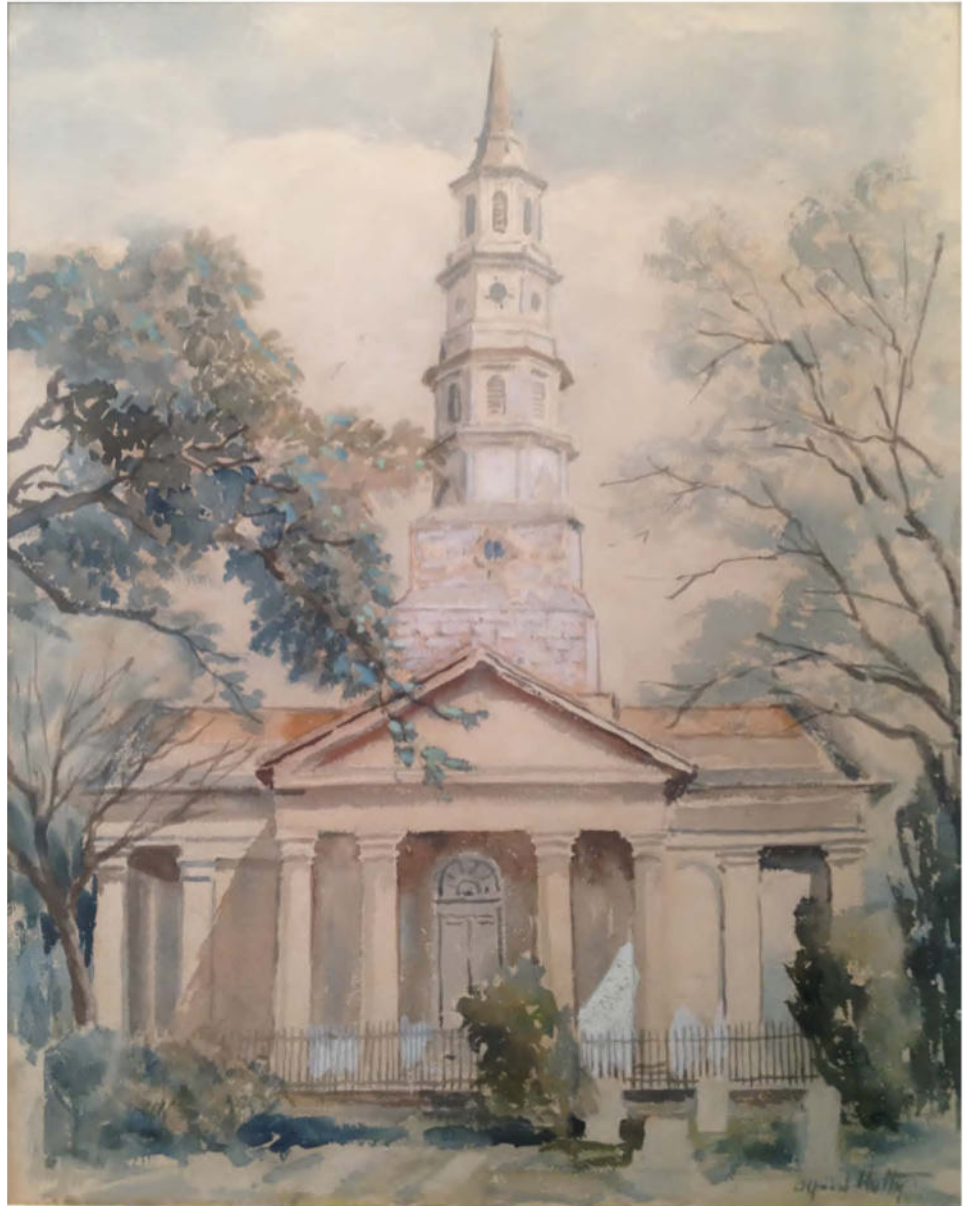
Although it generally focuses on regional history and nature more than on art, the Charleston Museum mounts the occasional exhibition devoted to the latter. On view through September 15 is *The Art of Abstraction: Modernism in Quilting*, and you can find rotating art installations with a local flavor at the City Gallery at Joe Riley Waterfront Park, operated by the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs.

THE GALLERY SCENE

Most of Charleston's art galleries are located in or near King Street, Broad Street, and the French Quarter, named for the talented Huguenot community of Protestants who fled Catholic France and contributed significantly to Charleston's prosperity. The Charleston Gallery Association (CGA) coordinates art walks on the first Friday evenings of almost every month, allowing opportunities to explore galleries after regular hours. Although they offer a range of styles and mediums, the galleries are aesthetically more traditional than the city's best-known cultural project, the Spoleto Festival USA mounted annually since 1977. (Tickets are now on sale for performances occurring May 22 through June 9.)

Because so many galleries in Charleston offer wonderful artworks, it seems only fair to cite them in alphabetical order rather than pretending to "rank" them. Anglin Smith Fine Art features the vibrant paintings of founder Betty Anglin Smith and of Kim English, the observant animal sculptures of Darrell Davis, and the black-and-white photographs of Tripp Smith, who deftly captures the flat, marshy "Lowcountry" along the coast near Charleston. On view May 3–20 are recent coastal scenes painted by Shannon Smith Hughes.

Ann Long Fine Art represents the classical realist masters Charles Cecil, Daniel Graves, and Ben Long, as well as younger talents like Jura Bedic, Paul Brown, Kamille Corry, Marc Dalessio, Louise Fenne, Jill Hooper, Elizabeth Leary, Leo Mancini-Hresko, Mario Robinson, Paula Rubino, Jordan Sokol, and Frank Strazzulla. Long also handles superb sculptures by Robert Bodem, as well as the estate of the aforementioned Alfred Huty.



Alfred Huty (1877–1954), *Old St. Philip's*, c. 1950, watercolor and gouache on paper, 26 3/4 x 20 1/4 in., private collection

Corrigan Gallery features such local standouts as Valerie Isaacs, Gordon Nicholson, Kristi Ryba, and Sue Simons Wallace. On view there May 3–31 will be *Tales from the Butcher Shop*, a show of John Hull's new paintings of professional wrestlers in the gym. (Hull is already known for his scenes of baseball teams and traveling carnivals, so this is not too surprising a direction for him.)

Dare Gallery handles the art of such talents as Allison Chambers, Trent Gudmundsen, and Douglas

Grier. Its current show (May 3–28) is *Flow: Sea and Sky*, which painter Jeanne Rosier Smith describes as her "love song to the coast — paintings that hold moments of awe." On May 3 she will demonstrate her impressive skill with pastels at the gallery.

Ella Walton Richardson Fine Art features painters like Lindsay Goodwin, Craig Nelson, Aleksander and Lyuba Titovets, and John C. Traynor. Scenes of South Carolina's natural beauty are made by West Fraser, who is represented by Helena Fox Fine Art. Fox also champions



Jeanne Rosier Smith (b. 1966), *Take Flight*, 2024, pastel on paper, 28 x 34 in., Dare Gallery

such nationally prominent figures as Sarah Amos, Patt Baldino, Christopher Blossom, John Budicin, John Cosby, William R. Davis, Donald Demers, Kathleen Dunphy, Billyo O'Donnell, Scott W. Prior, and Kent Ullberg.

At Hagan Fine Art, you'll find top works by Mary Garrish, Ulrich Gleiter, Joe Gyurcsak, Kevin Macpherson, and Daniil Volkov, as well as founder Karen Hewitt Hagan. Horton Hayes Fine Art has impressive paintings by Kathy Anderson, Larry Moore, and Elizabeth Pollie, while

LePrince Fine Art features Marc Anderson, Mark Bailey, Jacob Dhein, Ignat Ignatov, Kevin LePrince, and Aaron Westerberg

As its name suggests, Lowcountry Artists Gallery focuses primarily on landscapes, including scenes created by its owners Kellie Jacobs and Lisa Willits. Mary Martin Galleries of Fine Art, which has two spaces downtown, offers not only paintings and sculptures, but also a wide range of decorative arts, and even a roster of gifted muralists who can

be commissioned.

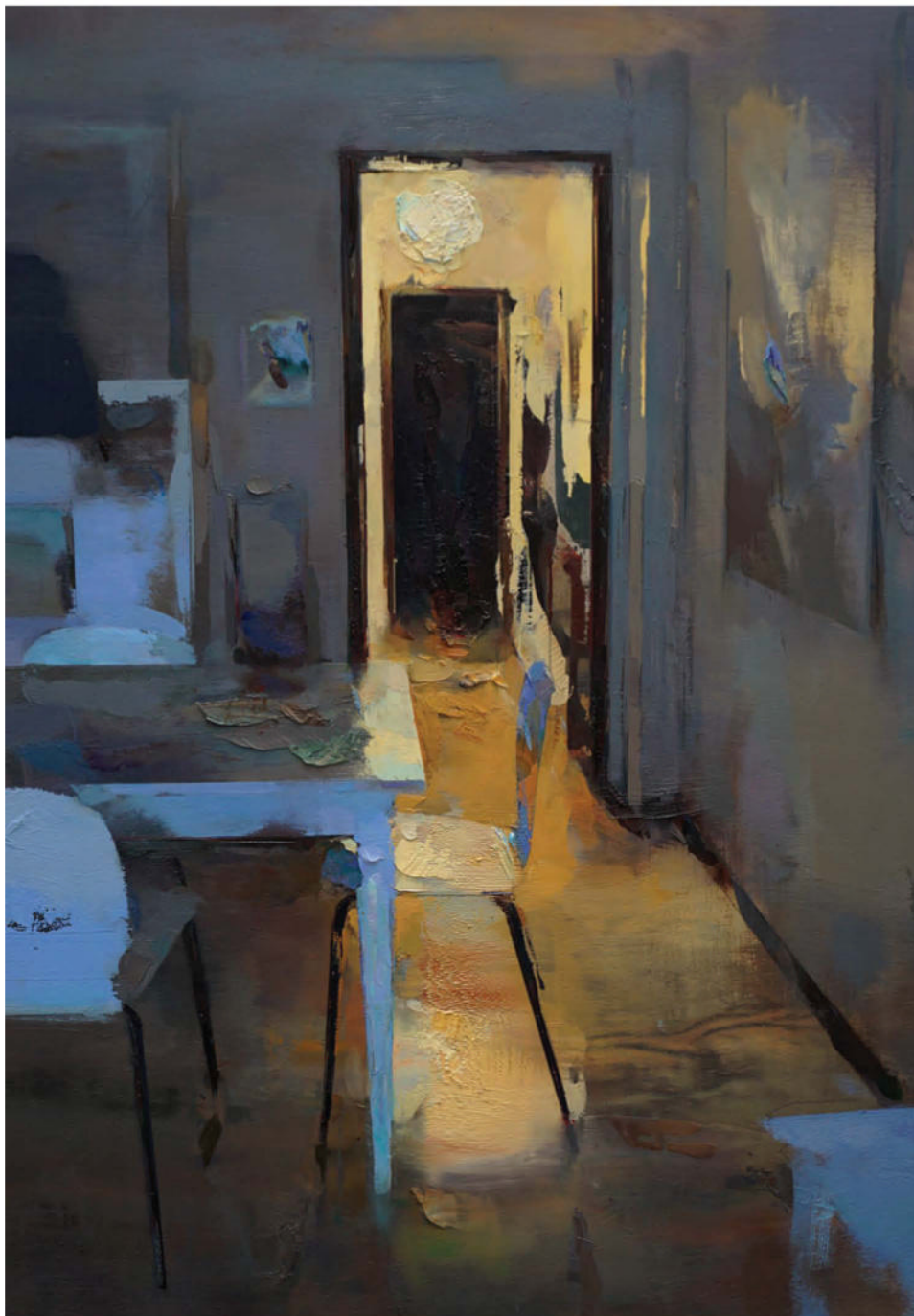
Meyer Vogl Gallery (located downtown and also on Daniel Island nearby) displays the paintings of its namesakes Marissa Vogl and Laurie Meyer, as well as works by Anne Blair Brown, Marc Hanson, Quang Ho, Lori Putnam, and Christopher St. Leger. Its current show is devoted to recent paintings by Carlos San Millán (May 1–29); up next is a group exhibition featuring works using the color yellow (June 7–28).

Neema Fine Art Gallery focuses

only on African American artists such as Noland Anderson and Otto Neals, while Principle Gallery offers leading realists like Anthony Ackrill, Lynn Boggess, Paige Bradley, Greg Gandy, Gavin Glakas, Christine Lashley, Robert Liberace, Jeremy Mann, Joseph McGurl, Sara Linda Poly, and Sergio Roffo. Its May show highlights recent still life paintings by Elizabeth Floyd.

Reinert Fine Art represents numerous talents including Lee Alban, Heather Arenas, Jill Basham, Calvin Liang, Neil Patterson, and William Schneider. This season it is presenting a show dedicated to Leonard Mizerek, who is highly regarded in the field of marine art. Robert Lange Studios offers work by its namesake, plus such colleagues as Timur Akhriev, Mia Bergeron, and Brett Scheifflee.

Several galleries in Charleston have tightly focused specializations. Particularly intriguing is Gallery Chuma, which features colorful artworks reflecting the Gullah culture that arose in the 19th century when African Americans settled in the isolated islands and marshlands stretching from Jacksonville, Florida, north to Wilmington, North Carolina. Dog & Horse Fine Art & Portraiture has everything for devotees of the hunt and kennel, including works by Roger Henry, Ian Mason, Nancy Pellatt, and Stone Roberts. Their rival nearby is The Sportsman's Gallery and Paderewski Fine Art, which handles works by Douglas Aagard, Nelson Boren, Mick Doellinger, Eldridge Hardie, Ralph Oberg, and Kyle Sims. And two galleries work exclusively with local artists: Charleston Artist Guild Gallery is a nonprofit with more than 600 members and 70 regular exhibitors, while Studio 151 Fine Arts also offers jewelry, wearable art, and wildlife photography.



Carlos San Millán (b. 1969), *Electric Light (Interior #200)*, 2024, oil on panel, 21 3/4 x 18 in., Meyer Vogl Gallery

A LIVELY CALENDAR

Every February, at least 40,000 people participate in the annual Southeastern Wildlife Exposition, the largest event of its kind in America. And every March comes a wave of activities that kick off Historic Charleston Foundation's month-long Charleston Festival, during which more than 150 private homes in

Charleston's oldest neighborhoods open their doors to visitors. To get a sense of the plantation culture that buoyed those neighborhoods via the hard work of enslaved people brought from Africa, visit Drayton Hall, a magnificent Palladian-style house from the 18th century located in the Lowcountry, roughly 15 miles northwest of Charleston.



Elizabeth Floyd (b. 1974), *Peonies and Cassatt (detail)*, 2024, oil on linen, 36 x 36 in., Principle Gallery



Also on deck every March is the city's major art fair, the annual Charleston Show featuring more than 30 dealers. And if you are seeking bargains, keep an eye on the sale schedules of Charleston Estate Auctions, where intriguing antiques and fine art can surface.

Whenever you visit Charleston, there is bound to be a cultural happening on the docket. Just be sure to leave enough time to wander the city's atmospheric streets and shoreline: Losing track of time is a key reason to visit this seemingly timeless place.

Leonard Mizerek (b. 1947),
St. Tropez Twilight, 2024, oil on linen panel,
16 x 12 in., Reinert Fine Art

Peter Trippi, editor-in-chief,
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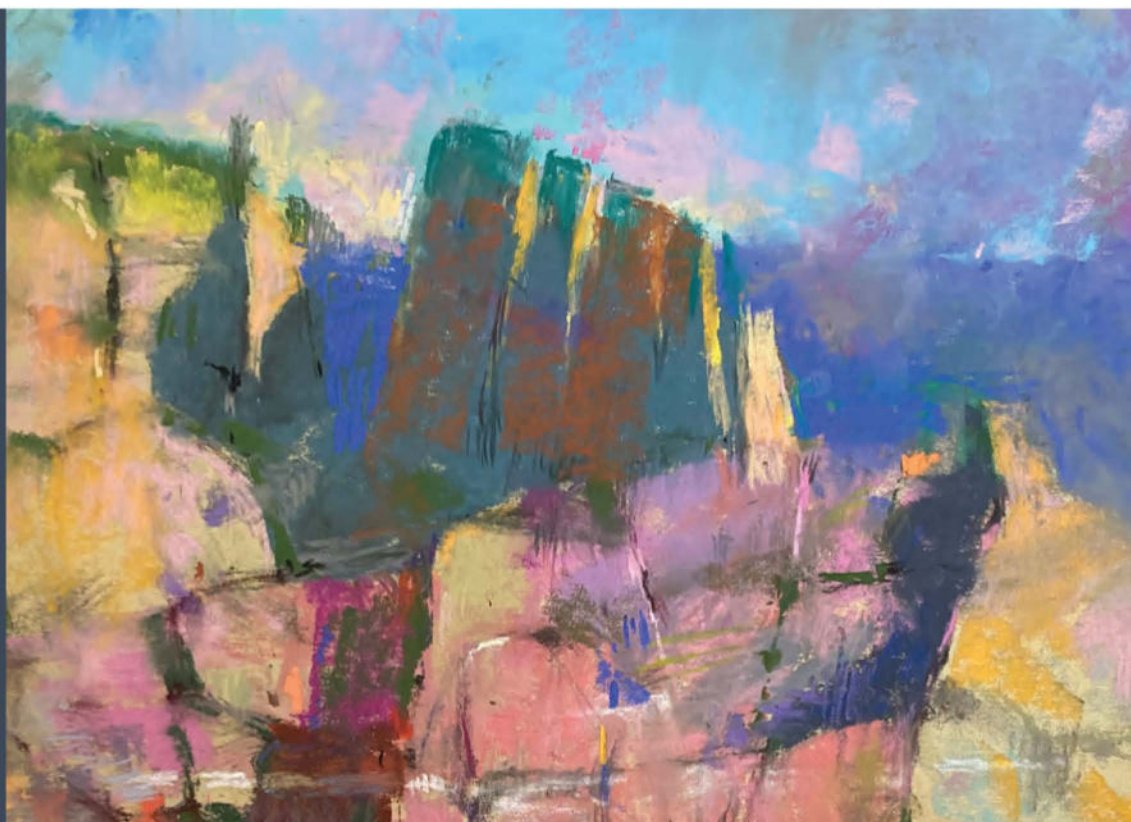
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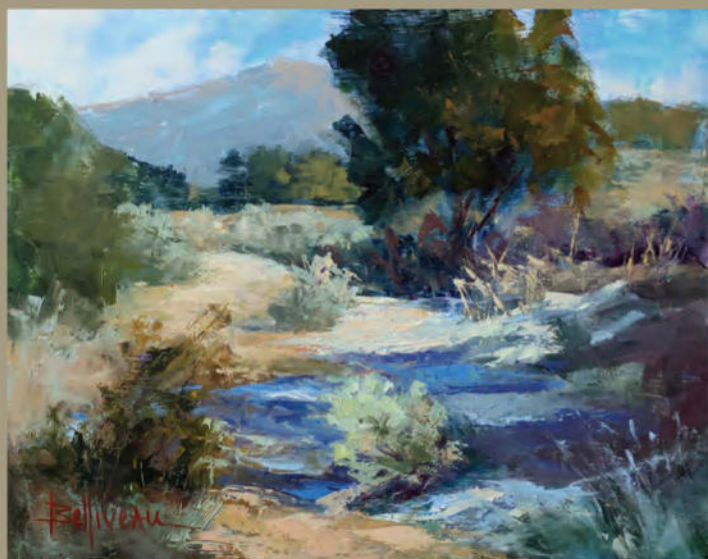


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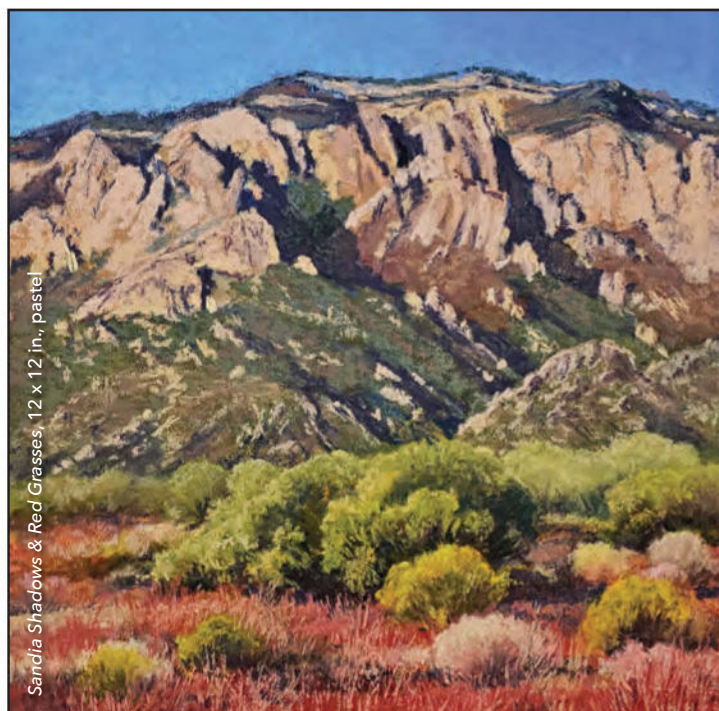
Hollyhocks, 12" x 6", oil

CAROLE BELLIVEAU



Snow Traces, 11"x14", Plein Air Oil

carolebelliveau.com
carolebelliveau@gmail.com

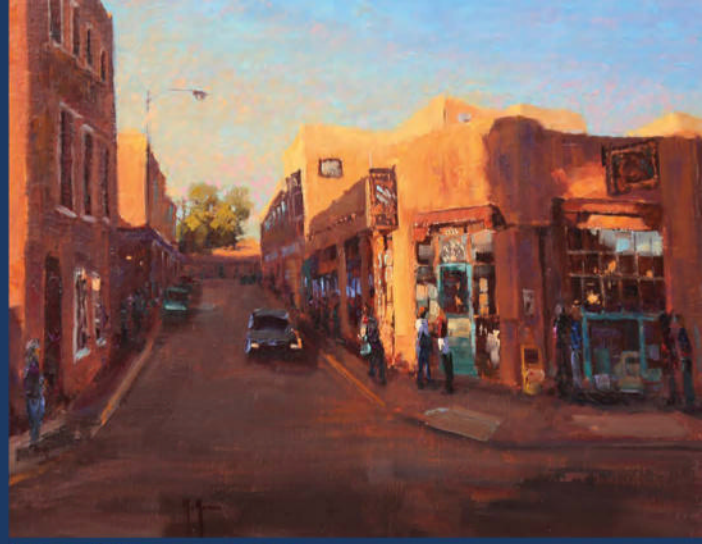


Sandia Shadows & Red Grasses, 12 x 12 in., pastel

Lee McVey

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Founder, New York Fashion Geek

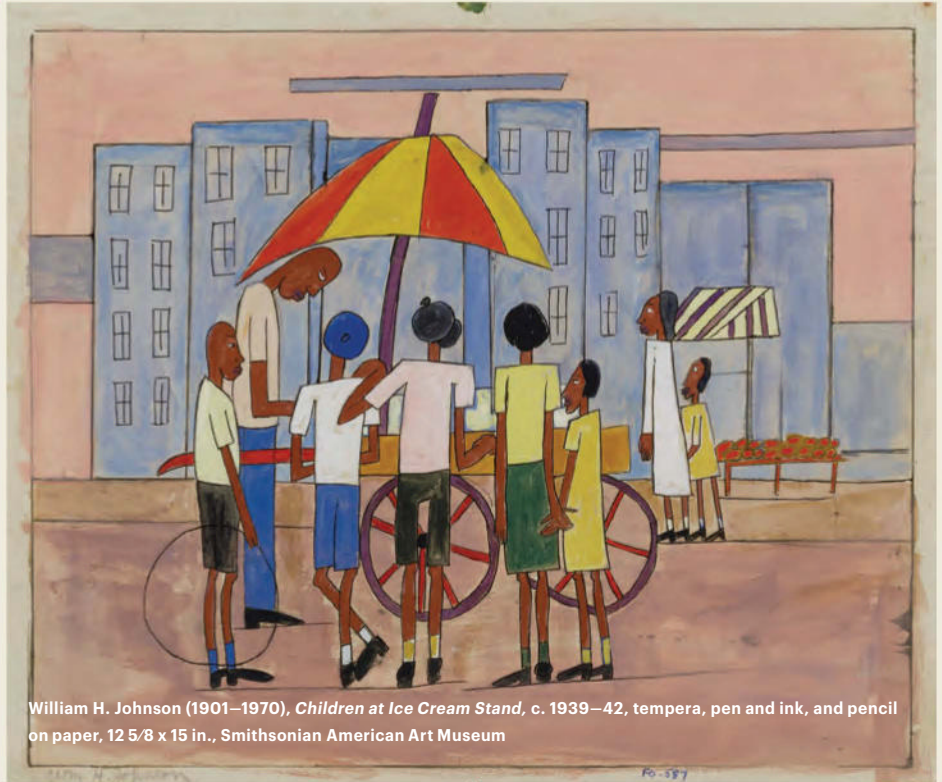


While the self-described New York Fashion Geek, Reginald Ferguson, knows that clothing styles go in and out of fashion, his taste for the artist William H. Johnson (1901–1970) never varies. Ferguson, who is New York's best-dressed man, is also someone who helps make other men look their best, and he remembers the first time he saw the paintings and drawings of Johnson, an artist he so reveres that he calls him “Mr. Johnson.”

“I’ve known of Mr. Johnson’s works since childhood, when I first encountered them at the Studio Museum in Harlem. Now here he is in the show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art [*The Harlem Renaissance and Transatlantic Modernism*, on view through July 28].” (A portrait painted by Johnson serves as that exhibition’s lead image.) So intrigued is Ferguson with Johnson’s oeuvre that he traveled to the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C., to see what he considers a favorite work, *Children at Ice Cream Stand*.

Ferguson grew up in Manhattan’s Greenwich Village, yet he always felt the cultural pull of the uptown neighborhood of Harlem. “When I was little, Harlem was already on my mind. It is the center of African American culture, and you can’t be Black in New York and not have a relationship with Harlem and its community.” Of the many works Johnson created in his lifetime, *Children at Ice Cream Stand* continues to affect Ferguson, notably in its direct evocation of a Harlem street.

“It’s a joyful scene,” he says of this drawing, which depicts children stopping at a wheel-drawn cart for scoops of ice cream on what is likely a weekend summer afternoon. “My late grandparents were Depression-era



William H. Johnson (1901–1970), *Children at Ice Cream Stand*, c. 1939–42, tempera, pen and ink, and pencil on paper, 12 5/8 x 15 in., Smithsonian American Art Museum

kids, and when I look at this work, I think that any of the figures could be them. I love its ethos and how it reverberates even now. You can still find someone rolling a cart of flavored ices, ringing a bell, and having kids congregating like a Pavlovian call.” Ferguson notes, too, the details of the mother and child in the background passing a table of produce, as well as one of the boys posed with a wooden hoop, a toy of the era. “Mr. Johnson gives such a strong sense of community, of childhood, of summer.”

Since founding New York Fashion Geek in 2020, Ferguson has become a much-sought-after resource for the men who hire him to “help achieve their goals, relieve their stress, and make them feel better about dressing.” He says, “I hope to take them from fashion-confused to fashion-confident. Most of my male clients would rather have their teeth pulled than go shopping for clothes.” While

Ferguson admits that Johnson’s scene doesn’t relate directly to his sense of fashion and style, he is keenly aware of the colors it employs, just as he is of the hues of the many suits and ties, shirts and trousers, shoes and accessories that fill the closets of his Brooklyn apartment.

“I grew up in an environment with my late mother and grandparents, who taught me the importance of style and fashion and looking good. My mother was cosmopolitan, erudite, cultured, and a good mother is your first teacher.” They also imparted lessons to young Ferguson on how to coordinate differing hues and patterns. “I’ve always been struck by the bold colors Mr. Johnson used in his art. There’s an angularity to the figures and other elements, not so unlike the way I appreciate the lines of clothing. I may be a jaded New Yorker, but I am never jaded about the art of Mr. Johnson.”



Mark Maggiori (b.1977), *Once Upon a Time*, 2020, Oil on canvas (detail)

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Amber Dong, *Still Life with Steak*, 11 x 14 in., Acrylic
amberdongart.com



Kay Cassill, *Musicians*, 12 x 12 in., Oil
kaycassill.com



Brian McClear, *Another Blown Fuse*, 48 x 48 in., Oil
McClearart.com

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Desree Pettera, *The Box Turtle Gang*, 24 x 36 in., Oil
desreepetteraart.com



Karen Budan, *OOPS!*, 16 x 16 in., Oil
karenbudan.com



Larry Riley, *Antique Navajo Doll*, 11 x 14 in., Oil
larryriley.com



Victoria Brooks, *Beach Stretch*, 30 x 24 in., Oil
vbrooks.com



Pat Tribastone, *Symphony of Yellows*, 16 x 20 in., Oil
patriciatribastoneart.com



Robin Williamson, *Blossoming Beauty*, 14x18, Oil
robinwilliamsonfineart.com
thedavincistudios.com



Gina Warren Buzby, *Chesapeake Sunset*, 24x24, Acrylic
ginawarrenbuzby.com



SUMMER 2024 EXHIBITS

June 7-Aug. 31



Unsettled Lands : Manette Rene Bradford

Reception: 06/27/2024

Travelled by MAGDA (Montana Art Gallery Directors Association), *Unsettled Lands* tells the complex story of visual culture, body landscapes, and the American West through contemporary drawings and relief sculpture.

June 28-Oct. 26



Artist Wilderness Connection: Celebrating 20 Years

Preview Reception: 06/27/2024

Featuring works by past participants, this exhibit marks the 20th anniversary of AWC, the Hockaday's Artist-in-Residence program in collaboration with the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation, Flathead National Forest, & Swan Valley Connections.

Thru Aug. 24



Ace Powell + Loaned Beadworks from Three Chiefs Cultural Center

Ace Powell works from the Permanent Collection with loaned Salish and Kootenai beadworks from the Three Chiefs Cultural Center.

Aug. 26-Oct. 5



Plein Air Glacier 2024: Paint Out, Exhibition, and Sale

Paint Out: 8/26-8/30/2024

Preview Party & Sale: 8/31/2024

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Community Garden, Joe Paquet, 2021, oil, 40 x 40 in., plein air with tweaks in the studio

Image: Mark Crenshaw, *Uinta Lilies*, 2023, oil on canvas.



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Image: 16th ARC Salon Exhibition, Sotheby's NY 2023, painting left (Ruth Fitton, *The Abduction of Time*) painting right (Jeffrey Vaughn, *Lilies After a Storm*)

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FIVE^{TO}WATCH

There is a lot of superb art being made these days.
This column by Brandon Rosas shines light on five gifted individuals.

The Cincinnati-based artist **BRAD DAVIS** (b. 1993) is drawn to symbols of change in his life and surroundings. “When I paint the city,” he says, “I look for places that are on the verge of demolition or renovation. When I paint portraits, they’re often of people with whom I interact daily and who operate as vessels for personal narratives. Painting has the incredible capacity to preserve, and I am at my core a preservationist.”

Davis inherited his gift for representation from his father, an elementary school art teacher. “I was always in awe of his ability to translate the visual world, and I remember him drawing with me anywhere we went,” he recalls. “At age 9, I saw N.C. Wyeth’s *Treasure Island* illustration series at the Brandywine Museum of Art [in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania], and after that I knew I wanted to be an oil painter.”

To that end, Davis earned a B.F.A. and M.F.A. in painting from the Art Academy of Cincinnati and Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, respectively. “It was a difficult path to pave through the ocean of conceptual critique, but I feel that it made me a stronger realist,” he recalls, noting that he began identifying with the urban focus of Ashcan School painters such as John Sloan.

Much like the Golden Age illustrators who first inspired him, Davis is committed to delighting viewers with the material quality of his art. “For me, painting is all about the experience of the physical surface of a work in conjunction with the depth of an illusion,” he explains. “Half of my job is to get viewers to see the work in person so that its physicality can be understood. That is where a viewer is most in conversation with all the human-centric nuance that oil painting has to offer.”

Although many of Davis’s works feature lusciously rendered urban scenes, he has recently been exploring more symbolic figurative works, such as *Noumena*. “This piece is about presence in the midst of absence,” says Davis, explaining that the title is a term coined by the philosopher Immanuel Kant for that which exists beyond human perception. “I posed my wife, Alex, with a cast of Diana the Huntress, who is seen in mythology as a beacon of life and death. In this way, she references the loss of Alex’s mother, who passed away unexpectedly a year ago. In the dark recesses on the painting’s left side is an empty bowl symbolizing the cavity of loss that always remains, as well as an openness to receive.”



BRAD DAVIS (b. 1993), *Noumena*, 2024, oil on wood, 32 x 24 in., available through the artist

DAVIS is self-represented. His solo exhibition *Heirlooms* will appear at Studio Kroner (Cincinnati) May 10–June 1.

CHRISTINA GRACE MASTRANGELO (b. 1983),
Hope Tends Upwards, 2021, oil on linen over
panel, 24 x 24 in., Guild of Boston Artists



Using materials and techniques handed down through the centuries, **CHRISTINA GRACE MASTRANGELO** (b. 1983) portrays the beauty of her world through a deeply attentive yet interpretative lens. “In classical realism, the artist makes many choices, whether to create color harmony or guide the viewer’s eye,” she says, “and it is within this artistic play that I find the most joy.”

Mastrangelo’s love of figurative art was awakened during a childhood visit to the Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and nourished by trips to Rome, Paris, and London during her teenage years. At 16, she learned to copy masterworks in a portrait workshop with American artist Frank Covino. “His ability to paint what he saw and match colors with ease was awe-inspiring. I was hooked,” she recalls.

Mastrangelo brought her hunger to learn to James Madison University (JMU) in Harrisonburg, Virginia, but was disappointed when her art professors could not teach what she sought. While studying in Florence during her junior year, she came across a poster and brochures for nearby academies that teach realist painting and drawing from life. “I was shocked to learn these schools existed,” she laughs.

After graduating from JMU with honors, Mastrangelo returned to Florence to study at the Angel Academy of Art under Michael John Angel, Jered Woznicki, and Martinho Correia. The work she completed in its three-year program earned her a scholarship through the Art Renewal Center’s International Salon Competition,

which she used to attend workshops at the Grand Central Atelier in New York City after returning to the U.S. in 2009.

Over the past 15 years, Mastrangelo has continued to work in the classical realist tradition, exhibiting at venues such as the Museu Europeu d’Art Modern in Barcelona and the Villa Bardini in Florence. She now divides her time between Massachusetts and Florida, and although she paints everything from still life to narrative multi-figure works, she has a special passion for highlighting the character and inner strength of female subjects.

This focus can be seen in *Hope Tends Upwards*, in which a woman gazes downward while raising her hands in a gesture that echoes the bird design printed behind her. “The crane is a symbol of hope and healing, of finding peace in challenging times,” Mastrangelo explains, “and with her eyes closed, I imagine this woman is picturing the lightweight feeling of her troubles flying away. I paint these works to remind us of who we really are, and how peace comes from a connectedness with nature and ourselves.”

MASTRANGELO is represented by the Guild of Boston Artists and Williams Fine Art Dealers (Wenham, Massachusetts). Her solo exhibition *What Nature Whispers* will appear at the Guild June 8–July 3. In July she will teach the workshop *Painting the Academic Still Life* on Zoom and in person at the Mill Studio of Fine Arts (Manchester, Connecticut).

MAUDIE BRADY (b. 1974), *The Philosopher*, 2023, HydroResin (artist's proof), 12 1/2 x 6 3/4 x 8 3/4 in. (not including base), available in bronze (edition of 3) through the artist

The work of Australian-born sculptor **MAUDIE BRADY** (b. 1974) can be seen not only in Barcelona's Museu Europeu d'Art Modern, but also in such celebrated film franchises as *Star Wars* and *Pirates of the Caribbean*, for which she sculpted set pieces and other assets.

Brady's immersion in the arts began at 2 years old, when her mother left a career in architecture for life as an actor and director. "We traveled Europe performing at fairs, then moved back to Australia to live off the grid in the tropical paradise of the New South Wales coast," she says. "It was a spectacular childhood full of creativity."

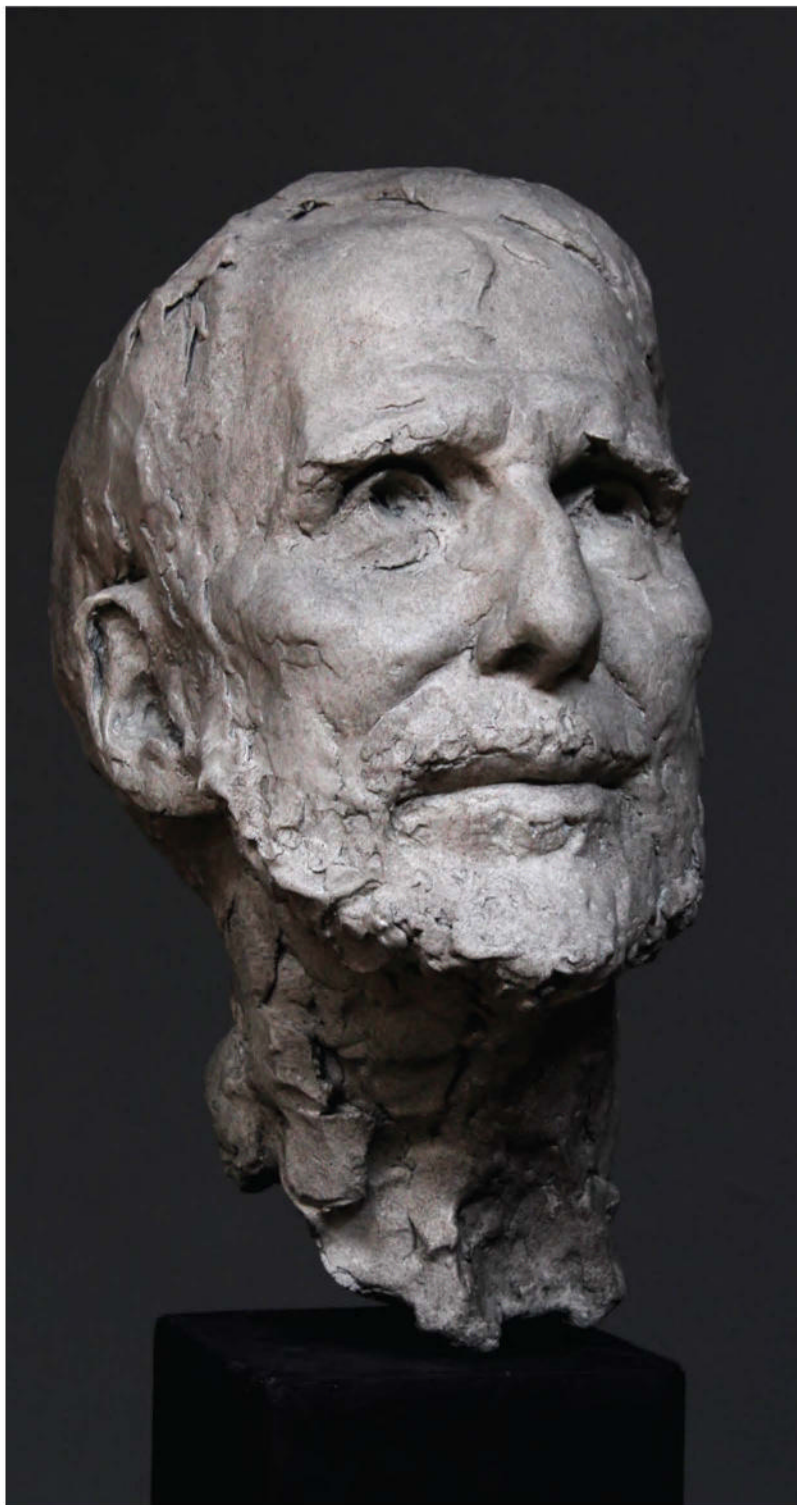
Brady earned her B.F.A. in sculpture from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in 1998, then began working in the art and construction departments of film studios. "The experience opened my eyes to how important it is to observe nature, with all its infinite variety, in order to achieve beauty through technical craftsmanship," she recalls.

After more than a decade in film, Brady realized that she had more to learn about sculpting figures, so she decided to pursue her education — and eventually, a fine art career — at the Florence Academy of Art (FAA). "I realized that if I didn't continue studying, I'd be always working for other people, never finding out what I had to offer the world on my own terms," she says.

After graduating in 2016, Brady went on to win Best Nude in the Art Renewal Center's 12th International Salon Competition and was twice named joint winner of Australia's prestigious Tom Bass Prize. She now serves as director of anatomy and *écorché* at the FAA, dividing her time between teaching there and sculpting in the studio she shares with her husband, Björn.

Today Brady's focus is firmly on the human figure: "I enjoy exploring ways to express a person's inner world and complexities, as well as finding ways to represent that in a pose that creates emotion through impression." She lists Auguste Rodin, Lotta Blokker, and Grzegorz Gwiazda among her inspirations.

Brady's penchant for visual drama can be seen in *The Philosopher*, a rapidly sculpted portrait that was cast in resin but would be equally suited to Carrara marble. "When I create figurative work,



I'm seeking to represent and sometimes amplify a universal human condition that opens the door for viewers to relate in their own unique way," she explains. "The point of artistic dialogue is not to be literal, but to allow subconscious connections to be made and personal meaning to be formed."

BRADY is self-represented.



B.J. PARKER (b. 1980), *The Overly Icon*, 2022, oil on marble in vintage wooden *kiot* (icon case), 8 x 10 in., available through the artist

Georgia-born artist **B.J. PARKER** (b. 1980) has always been fascinated by art, and by life's big questions. "I grew up steeped in Southern religion and felt a strong pull to the transcendent," says Parker, whose early memories involve sitting in church and drawing pictures of the sermons on the backs of papers that were in the pews.

This affinity led to an interest in Greek mythology, and in high school Parker learned "bits of Greek and Hebrew so that I could explore the ideas in the texts more fully," he recalls. Although a career in art was always his goal, consulting his faith community about his interest in the transcendent led Parker first to a career in ministry.

After years of working at churches, Parker decided to pursue a doctorate in religious studies at Texas's Baylor University, which led to a key realization. "It finally clicked that I had been separating my search for the sublime from the use of visual language, and that I was happiest when I merged the two," he explains, adding that it was then, at age 34, that he decided to pursue an art career.

Parker enrolled at the nearby Texas Academy of Figurative Art while completing his dissertation at Baylor, and later he studied online with Sadie Valeri and Patricia Watwood. Today, he

is recognized as an associate living master by the Art Renewal Center, is lead instructor at the Gateway Academy of Classical Art in St. Louis, and creates art that explores the narratives humans use to make sense of the world.

"In my last body of work, *In Search: (Re)building Myth*, I imagined a world in which the loss of all meaningful stories led to a collapse of civilization that left individuals searching for ways to understand the past and build new stories," Parker says. "I also made several artifacts that could come from this world, items that I saw as being quasi-sacred and used by common people."

One such work is *The Overly Icon*, a mysterious piece Parker created by painting a portrait on pieces of marble from a decaying St. Louis building and float-mounting them in a 19th-century icon box known as a *kiot*. "I hope to provoke a sense of wonder and awe in my work, but also to open the door to a bit of fermenting restlessness," he says. "I think the combination of those feelings can lead to a recognition of the value of humanity and of the fundamental goodness of individual life."

PARKER is self-represented.

JOSÉ LÓPEZ VERGARA (b. 1994), *Pegasus*, 2023, oil on linen, 15 x 12 in., private collection

Working in Madrid, **JOSÉ LÓPEZ VERGARA** (b. 1994) draws inspiration from art history to idealize modern life in timeless compositions. “I’m very attracted to the raw shapes and design of antique art and the first representations of the human figure,” he says. “The iconography in my work comes from a mixture of influences and my desire to simplify shapes.”

Vergara first developed an interest in classical painting on a childhood trip to the Museo Nacional del Prado, where he was exposed to masterworks by Diego Velázquez and Peter Paul Rubens. “I was around 8 or 10 years old, and that visit left a mark,” he remembers. “One painting I saw, Rubens’s *St. George and the Dragon*, inspires me to this day.”

Around that same time, Vergara suffered an accident that permanently impaired the movement of his dominant arm. “Fortunately, it didn’t prevent me from holding a pencil or a brush,” he affirms. “More than anything, the accident pushed me to draw more and to prove that it wouldn’t be an obstacle.”

Vergara achieved viral fame as a teenager when his hyper-realistic colored pencil drawings won a contest on Instagram and were subsequently shared by celebrities and news outlets worldwide. “It was an extraordinary experience, but those drawings were just a technical exercise,” he notes. “After all the fuss disappeared, I started working on my actual interests and realized I had to find a way to make paintings like that Rubens I saw at the Prado.”

After six years of classical study — three at Florence’s Angel Academy of Art and three at the Grand Central Atelier in New York City — Vergara now creates arresting compositions that pay homage to the great artists of the past while speaking to present-day collectors. *Pegasus*, illustrated here, is from a recent series that depicts fierce-looking women posed in front of medieval tapestries



while wearing headpieces that signal their status in the fictional worlds Vergara creates.

“For the background, I referenced a tapestry from 1520 titled ‘Fame’ that shows Perseus riding fire-breathing Pegasus and holding the severed head of Medusa, which I think fits the model’s attitude perfectly,” Vergara explains. “To me, both the figure and the tapestry represent strength, power, seduction, mystery, and beauty.”

Through a blend of Renaissance techniques, medieval heraldry, and modern attitudes, Vergara hopes to create work that will outlive its present context. “I think true art transcends cultures, religions, ideologies, and even time,” he declares. “I want to create something pure that can be enjoyed now and in a thousand years.”

VERGARA is represented by Arcadia Contemporary (New York City).



TODAY'S
MASTERS

BY MATTHIAS ANDERSON

ON AND NEAR THE WATER

There is nothing quite so soothing as the sound of water, whether it comes in the form of a crashing wave or a lapping ripple. This pleasure is often enhanced by the experience of rocking gently aboard a boat or ship, a sensation that many of the artists illustrated here have chosen to convey.

Whatever their motif, whatever their style, these talents have succeeded in welcoming us into their visions of life along the shore and on the water. Enjoy, and please head to the water yourself, soon. ●

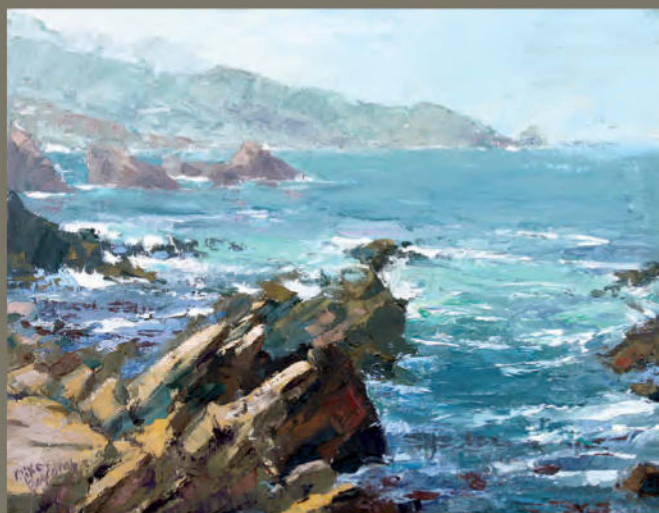
MATTHIAS ANDERSON is a contributing writer to *Fine Art Connoisseur*.



BETH BATHE (b. 1959), *Mary Day*, 2022, oil on panel, 18 x 36 in., Camden Falls Gallery (Camden, Maine)



RYAN DAVIS (b. 1995), *Gloucester Harbor Sail*,
2024, oil on canvas, mounted on custom-
shaped panel, 29 x 29 in., Gallery
Poulsen (Copenhagen)



(ABOVE LEFT) MIKE BAGDONAS (b. 1942), *Crumbling Coast*, 2012, oil on linen board, 11 x 14 in., private collection ■ (ABOVE RIGHT) SUE BARRASI (b. 1963), *Louisiana Summer*,
2022, oil on archival Ampersand Gessobord, 5 x 7 in., private collection

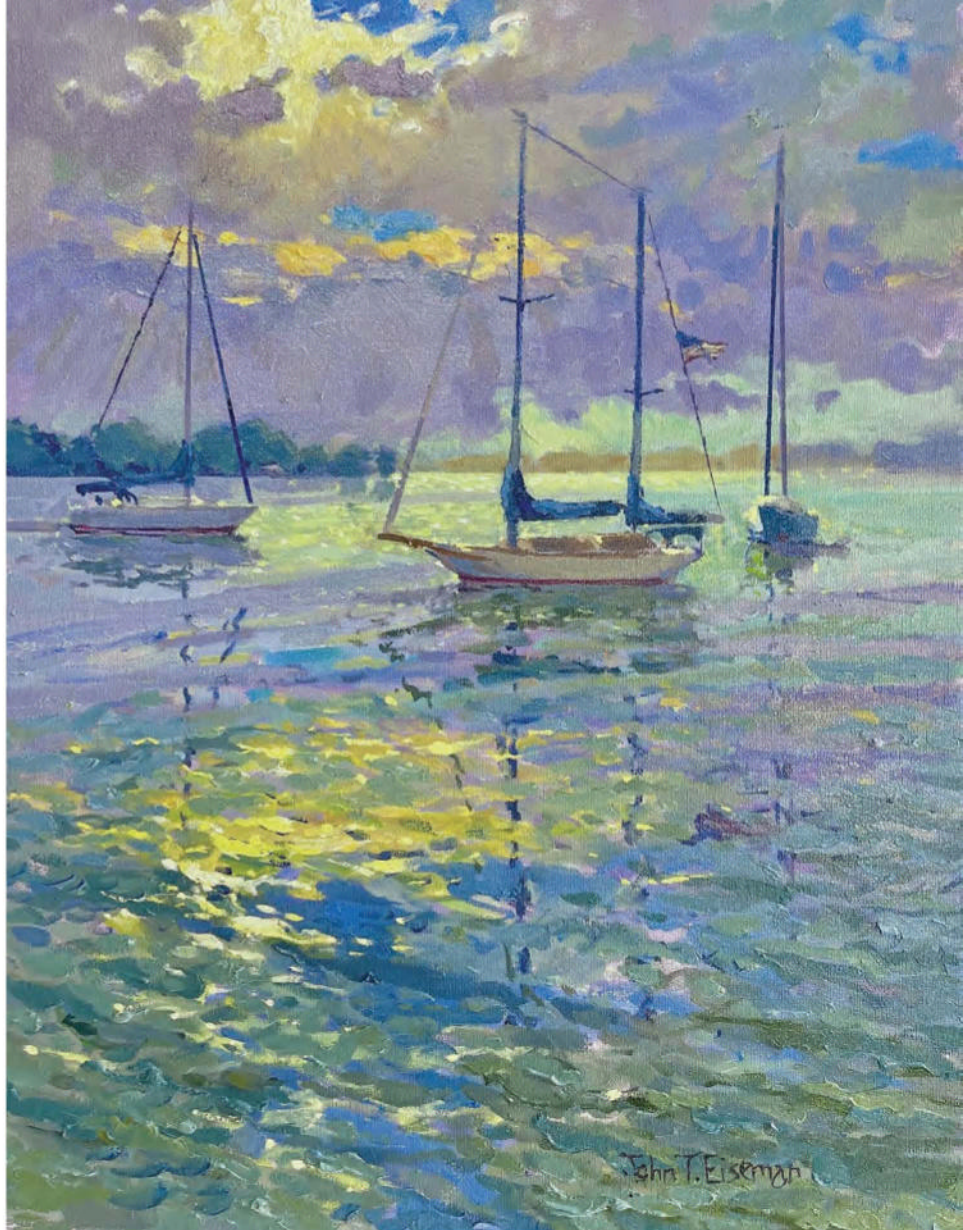




(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) **LAUREL DANIEL** (b. 1956), *Island Beacon*, 2023, oil on panel, 12 x 9 in., private collection ■ **DEENA S. BALL** (b. 1961), *Fog Shift*, 2023, oil on copper, 12 x 12 in., private collection ■ **JUDITH FEINS** (b. 1951), *Edge Illuminated*, 2019, oil on canvas, 30 x 40 in., private collection ■ **DEBRA JOY GROESSER** (b. 1957), *Morning Glory*, 2013, oil on linen panel, 24 x 30 in., private collection ■ **RICK DELANTY** (b. 1951), *Sleeping Cat*, 2022, oil on board, 12 x 16 in., Minnesota Marine Art Museum (Winona)



(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) **DOUGLAS GRIER** (b. 1947), *Evening Crabber*, 2022, oil on canvas, 35 x 27 in., Dare Gallery (Charleston) ■ **MARIANNA FOSTER** (b. 1982), *Young Odyssey*, 2023, oil on wood panel, 14 x 14 in., private collection ■ **CATHERINE HILLIS** (b. 1953), *Seaside Geometry*, 2020, watercolor on paper, 22 x 28 in., available through the artist ■ **NEAL HUGHES** (b. 1952), *Blue Skiff*, 2024, oil on linen, 24 x 36 in., Hughes Gallery (Boca Grande, Florida) ■ **ELLEN HOWARD** (b. 1965), *Last Light*, Carmel River Beach, 2024, oil on linen panel, 11 x 14 in., Carmel Fine Art (Carmel-by-the-Sea, California)



(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) **BARBARA JAENICKE** (b. 1964), *Cape Kiwanda Surf*, 2022, oil on linen, 18 x 24 in., private collection ■ **JOHN T. EISEMAN** (b. 1958), *Morning Has Broken*, 2022, oil on canvas, 20 x 16 in., private collection ■ **STEPHANIE AMATO** (b. 1959), *A Grand View*, 2023, oil on canvas, 36 x 48 in., Huff Harrington (Atlanta and Paris) ■ **CHRISTINE LASHLEY** (b. 1967), *Sun Sparkles*, 2024, oil on canvas, 60 x 48 in., Principle Gallery, Charleston



(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) **MATT DEPROSPERO** (b. 1965), *Tethered*, 2024, oil on panel, 18 x 14 in., MADE Gallery (Lambertville, New Jersey) ■ **JIM LAURINO** (b. 1961), *Hills Bay Fence-line*, 2023, oil on canvas, 16 x 16 in., private collection ■ **KIM LORDIER** (b. 1966), *The Magic Hour, Torrey Pines*, 2023, pastel on paper, 24 x 30 in., Huse Skelly Gallery (Newport Beach, California) ■ **GAYLE MADEIRA** (b. 1969), *Sunset on the Marshes*, 2019, oil on linen panel, 7 x 14 in., private collection ■ **SUSAN LYNN** (b. 1963), *At the Bow*, 2023, oil on linen, 9 x 12 in., available through the artist



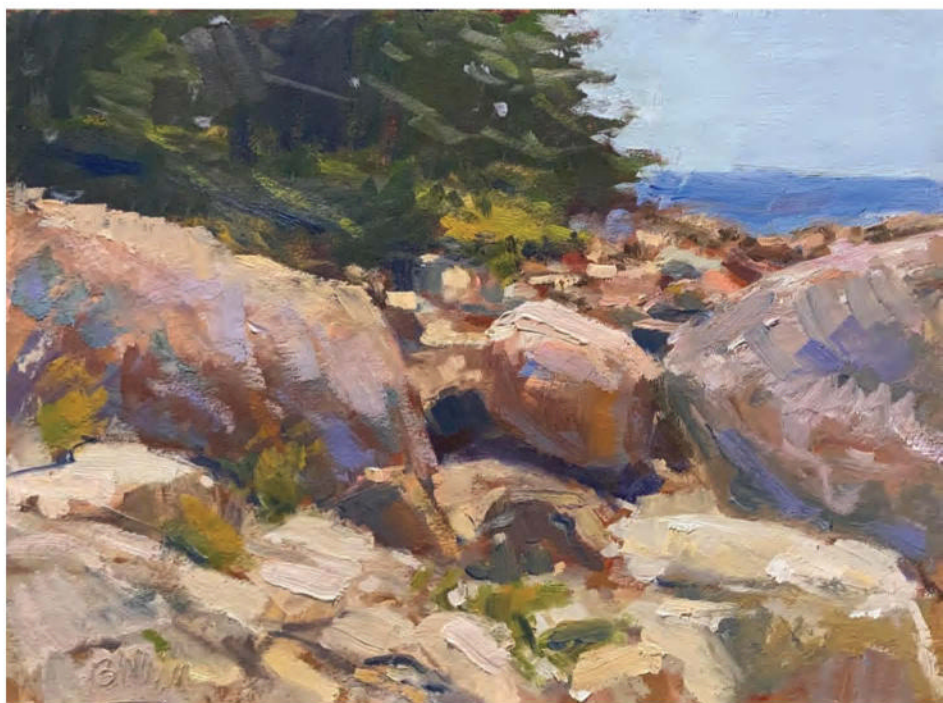
(TOP) **DAVID MARTY** (b. 1951), *A View of Crescent Bay*, 2021, oil on canvas, 12 x 16 in., private collection ■ (ABOVE LEFT) **JEFF MATHISON** (b. 1950), *Not So Bad*, 2013, watercolor on paper, 9 x 12 in., available through the artist ■ (ABOVE RIGHT) **KELLY SCHAMBERGER** (b. 1985), *Once upon a Childhood*, 2020, oil on aluminum panel, 24 x 33 1/2 in., private collection



LAURENCE O'TOOLE (b. 1968), *Harbour Swans Evening*, 2022, oil on canvas, 16 x 16 in., private collection



(ABOVE LEFT) **SCOTT ANTHONY** (b. 1948), *Calm Afternoon at Mendocino Point*, 2021, oil on hardboard panel, 12 x 16 in., Prentice Gallery (Mendocino, California) ■ (ABOVE RIGHT) **LORI PUTNAM** (b. 1962), *Yorkshire Coast*, 2023, oil on linen, 30 x 36 in., available through the artist



(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) **BARBARA TAPP** (b. 1954), *Winter Light, Big Sur*, 2023, watercolor on paper, 13 x 18 in., private collection ■ **BRENT SCHREIBER** (b. 1975), *Heathen Chemistry 11*, 2023, oil on panel, 48 x 36 in., Westland Gallery (London, Ontario) ■ **BARB WALKER** (b. 1954), *Good Day*, 2023, oil on paper, 9 x 12 in., Camden Falls Gallery (Camden, Maine) ■ **JILL STEFANI WAGNER** (b. 1955), *Yacht Club Reflections*, 2017, oil on linen, 12 x 12 in., private collection



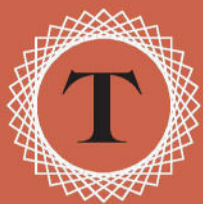
(TOP) DAVID SHINGLER (b. 1982), *Ocean Sky*, 2019, oil on wood, 40 x 48 in., Momentum Gallery (Asheville, North Carolina) ■ (ABOVE) RICHARD WILSON (b. 1971), *Calm after the Storm*, 2023, soft pastel on archival board, 20 x 60 in., available through the artist



(TOP) BENJAMIN LUSSIER (b. 1988), *Under the Floods*, 2023, oil on board, 12 x 16 in., private collection ■ (LEFT) SARAH WARDA (b. 1967), *Summer Light*, 2020, oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in., 33 Contemporary (Miami) ■ (RIGHT) PAULA HOLTZCLAW (b. 1954), *Moment of Quiet*, 2024, oil on linen panel, 24 x 36 in., Highlands Art Gallery (Lambertville, New Jersey)



MARK SHASHA (b. 1961), *Côte d'Azur*, 2023, oil on panel, 12 x 9 in., private collection



TODAY'S
MASTERS

BY MICHAEL J. PEARCE

ODD NERDRUM AT HOME IN NORWAY

At the snow-covered tip of southern Norway, the liminal coastline shimmers between the end of the earth and the beginning of water. Smooth little islands, ground gray by ancient glaciers from extrusions of Stavern granite, push through the surface. Steam from the sea freezes into a stripe of hanging fog suspended in a weighty layer beneath a pale blue sky. A bare and brief winter sun lights the thickened snow in a low, elongated dawn and stretched dusk. The reflected northern light bounces through a tall window into the second story of a cold, wooden barn, its exterior walls of red ochre contrasting sharply against the white snowdrifts.

Inside the barn is a warm bohemian tangle of bare wood, chaos, and creativity, with a cluster of huge linen canvases stretched onto sturdy bars tied with strips of cloth to the frames of wheeled wooden easels. There a painter, draped in a large white cotton smock, stares through round-rimmed spectacles at a gray and naked man who stands on a sturdy crate, his bare feet turned in and ashamed, head hung, with hands covering his crotch. The white hair of the artist Odd Nerdrum (b. 1944) curls beneath the flopped brim of his wide straw hat, spilling over a black cashmere sweater tied like a shawl over his smocked shoulders. His thick ankles are wrapped in heavy woolen socks sagging gray over new black sneakers that jar the 17th-century tones of bare wood and coarse cloth. Nerdrum's head tilts back, and in the melodic song of the Norwegian language he directs his model to adjust the position of his fingers.



The studio barn; photo: Michael Pearce

On his palette, Nerdrum mixes warm mustards of vermillion and yellow ochre, scrapes lead white and ivory black, and adds layers to the warmth and glow of the painting before him. His hands are sheathed in



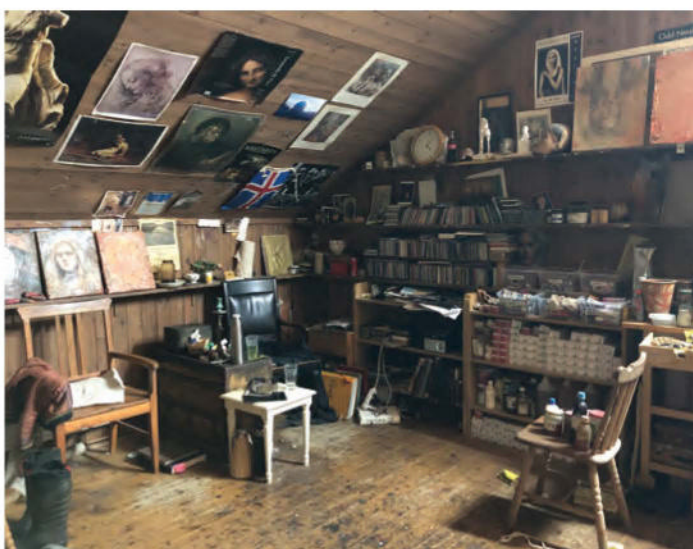
Odd Nerdrum painting *The Burning Boat*; photo: Michael Pearce ■ Odd Nerdrum; photo: Bork Nerdrum

fingerless white gloves; with a short-handled flat he brushes paint with the casual familiarity of flow. Somewhere in the mysterious birthplace of imagination he has found a raw image of a shipwrecked man and woman standing on a bedraggled shoreline as their skiff burns in the ocean behind them, heated in a conflagration of white light and red flame beneath an oily black smear of smoke rising through the still and filthy air. The couple are wretched and humiliated. Nerdrum explains that they were careless with their untended fire; now their chances have past, and they have nothing. What hope do the aged have for salvation from the consequences of their own

failures? He says he will call this painting *The Burning Boat*.

CALLING IT LIKE IT IS

Nerdrum is often criticized for the grim horrors he favors as the subjects of his dramas, as though art should be ashamed to offend. But to complain of his dark depictions of human experience is to pretend that our species is blameless and already capable of life in utopia, despite the overwhelming evidence that we are as degenerate, casually violent, and abusive as we have ever been. The unease and fear that Nerdrum's paintings generate arise precisely because he paints scenes reflecting the brutish cruelties present in contemporary life. That these cruelties exist creates intense discomfort among idealists who fantasize about Western progress toward a perfected world; Nerdrum shatters their hopes by cutting to the sensual bone of the human experience. Worse, he uses the traditional techniques of the individualist Rembrandt, and the shadows and violence of Caravaggio's melodramas; for subjects he uses perennial themes sourced directly from the ancient literature and imagery that



A corner of the studio; photo: Michael Pearce

The Murder of Andreas Baader, 1977–78, oil on canvas, 127 1/2 x 103 in., Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo

have provided the foundations of Western culture. Aristotle is his friend and guide, for Nerdrum is at heart a tragedian. A Shakespearean dramaturge of pigment and palette, he doesn't paint the truth; he paints raw feelings and experiences, offering no answers but telling no lies, following Aristotle's wise advice that "tragedy is a representation, not of men, but of action and life, of happiness and unhappiness."

For avant-gardists, then, Nerdrum has been a ghastly, kitsch creature — a traditionalist and a truth-teller revealing the primitive nature of our species by exposing eternal themes with a critical eye cast upon their pretensions to utopia. They have seen the spectral shape of their enemy in his art. To conservatives he has been almost as awful. This was a successful and prospering bohemian armed with both the cut of truth and the simple compassion of clear sight. Thus, Nerdrum became the reviled genius of our time. His mature paintings of the 1980s were astonishing images that showed a wandering generation of painters that it was possible to say something new with the figure, that there was a brave new world of potential, that they had a home and refuge from the wasteland. His 1990s paintings of women defecating and of hermaphrodites, and his self-portrait with an impressive erection, were as shocking and topical as any scandalous postmodernist's work, yet always remained within the realms of honest inquiry. Odd Nerdrum changed our lives.

Until he was almost 40, Nerdrum was a graphic and gory social realist, painting — among other scenes — a scandalous staging of the murder of imprisoned German terrorist Andreas Baader; a lush and gruesome still life of blood and guts spilling from the belly of an eviscerated victim killed in a hit and run; and a massive emulation of Théodore Géricault's *Raft of the Medusa* remade for the new era. Nerdrum's cast of characters were already physiological creatures, but soon they bore a new, sensitive, and subtle burden. Tragedy aims at representing men better than they are, wrote Aristotle, and since the early 1980s — when Nerdrum truly became Nerdrum — his instinctive compassion, which is coupled to human consciousness, became the principal characteristic that redeemed his subjects from cruel bestiality. There was emergent transcendence there, and experience, but in paint he was no longer a didactic sermonizer. If he wished to

Refugees at Sea, 1979–80, oil on canvas, 132 x 201 in., private collection





View from the studio barn, with a bronze sculpture of an Indian boy in the foreground; photo: Michael Pearce



Crossing the Border, 2013, oil on canvas, 80 1/3 x 100 3/4 in., Nerdum Museum

teach anything through those mature paintings, it was the lesson that humans are sensual beings, and compassion is a sensual experience.

As we begin the second quarter of the postmodern 21st century awash in popular figurative art, it is hard to imagine the strangled culture that languished at the end of the previous era. From New York, the so-called avant-garde gripped the throat of imagination and squashed representation, exiling their advocates into a cultural wilderness. Then, there were almost no ateliers to train in, and even Andrew Wyeth's

fabulous *Christina's World* was hung ignominiously in a hallway near the elevators at MoMA. But Nerdum cut the conceptual cloth with visceral repulsion and disgust, and his sensual apocalypse felt real.

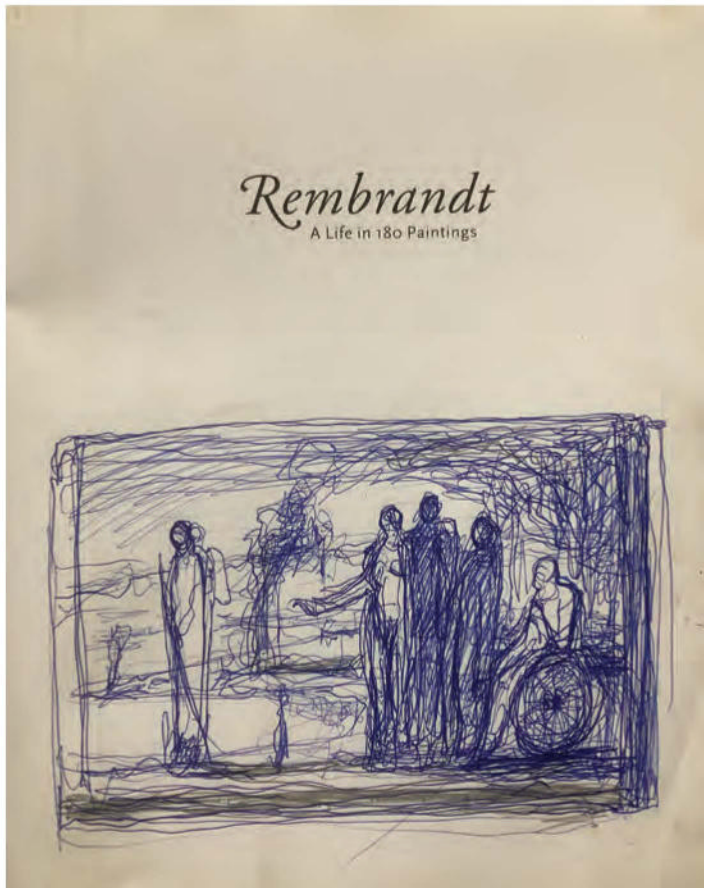
LIFE IN THE NORTH

Much of Nerdum's work is misunderstood by people unfamiliar with his Norwegian home, where the thin light of pale winter caresses the shadowed landscape in truncated days, with a long dawn and stretched twilight; the low sun slips embarrassed across the ashamed meridian like a fugitive, barely peering above the horizon. Here mankind wakes and sleeps in darkness. The old gods hang closer to the earth in the North, where sometimes the aurora lights glow green, reflected in drifting snow. The perennial mysteries of life and death are present and personal, and the pragmatic practicalities of survival dwell comfortably alongside the mysteries and magic of this strange land. Nature is a moody mistress here. It is not her role to play a Gaian lover or friend, and she is comfortable with killing.

When Nerdum paints figures wrapped in furs, they are pictures of individuals engaged in a real fight against the fierce frost cutting to their bones, not a fantasy from the Northern Wall of Westeros. When Nerdum paints people's heads and hands covered in leather skullcaps and sheepskins, he is inspired by the circumstances of survival. When Nerdum paints naked men and women basking on the sculpted rocks in the pale sun of Norwegian spring, they radiate honest relief that the days of light have come, that silent winter has closed until time restores her season.

Nerdum is a cathartic creature of mood. It is easy to overlook the transcendent and galactic light he paints when his subjects soar in the effervescent eternity of sparkling space, and to forget that when his Doggerland refugees find comfort in spring's new growth, and when his motif babies are raised aloft by empathetic men and women bearing their fragile bodies as symbols of hope, love, and life, borne into the future's golden light by willing hands and upright hearts, these are paintings of joy.

In the converted barn, Nerdum's visiting students make brief homes in simple rooms. In exchange for lodging and learning, they help in the atelier upstairs, preparing canvases, grinding paint, and sometimes modeling. They paint in the spacious students' studio next door, overlooking a long pasture stretching down to the astonishingly beautiful beach, toward the light and budding landscape of Nerdum's springtime paintings. A solitary bluestone monolith rises from the snow, and a bronze sculpture of an Indian boy squats upon a rock, face lifted to the southern



Nerdrum's preliminary drawing for *Leaving the Sanatorium* appears on the title page of a Rembrandt monograph; photo: Michael Pearce

sun that glows three thin fingers above the horizon. Horses and long-horned goats chew hay and stare.

Some fine and famous painters have served short apprenticeships with Nerdrum — Maria Kreyn was his muse, and Amy Sherald, Fergus Ryan, and Rose Freymuth-Frazier have broken bread with him. Hundreds have benefited from his generosity, and dozens have awakened here and raised their heads to breathe the heady trails of Swedish coffee brewing black in the austere kitchen. They have followed that drifting aroma through the wooden hall past a little self-portrait etching by Rembrandt, who is the patron saint of this special place, past a palette encrusted with rich pigment nailed to the wall, winding up the crack and creak of narrow stairs to mingle with the scented weight of linseed oil and conversation in his studio, where bare chairs wait to bear them.

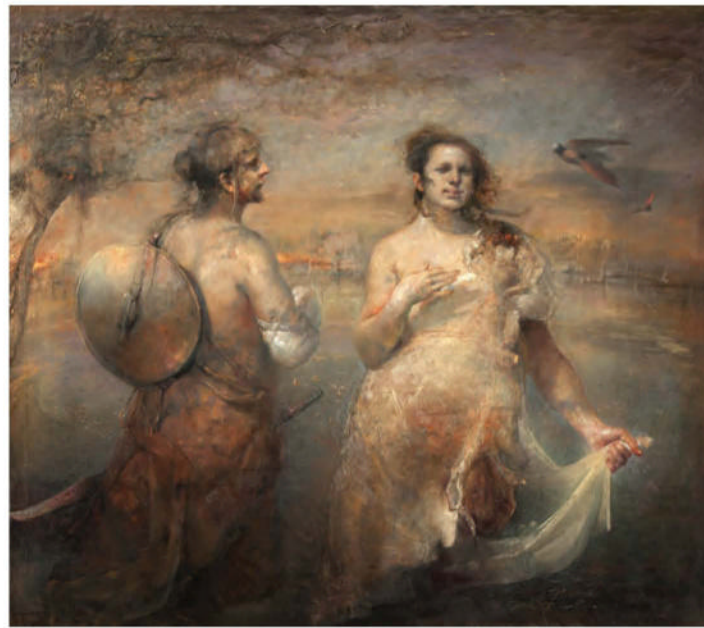
Nerdrum paints while the radio burbles pleasant folk songs and chatter. Shelves under the angled attic snug are loaded with boxed paint and books, and a line of studied heads painted onto encrusted ground-mixing boards lean against the sloping ceiling. Battered books of his heroes lie in stacks, the empty spaces between picture pages filled with blue biro sketches — like his preliminary drawing for *Leaving the Sanatorium* scrawled onto the title page of a Rembrandt monograph. Beside the glass doors are jumbled animal skulls and skins, stuffed birds and baskets, boxes and bundles of linen and rolled rags. Nerdrum's big black coat hangs from a metal light stand. A jam of easels bearing a half-dozen broad canvases surround him, ochred linen stretched over strong frames, some of them close to completion.



A new version of *The Animal Stone*; photo: Michael Pearce



Öde Nerdrum (one of Odd's two sons) in the Nerdrum Museum's great hall, before its renovation



Egg Snatchers, 2011, oil on canvas, 70 1/2 x 79 1/2 in., Nerdrum Museum

Among them, a young, bearded longbowman stands impassive and Paleolithic before an Icelandic arch of cooled tectonic lava. He has no arms, a tragic figure at the end of the world, hanging on the edge of comedy. A plump nude hermaphrodite awaits our admiration. Naked women look out at the ocean with a swaddled baby balanced on their boulder and an empty moored boat gently drifting. Nerdrum's wife, high-cheeked Turid, wears the white of midsummer and walks with her daughter among the light-leaved aspens. A shocked and shrinking group of naked women wades into the still cold waters of springtime. And, as always, the end is everything. In a final flourish on a huge canvas, a group of patients say farewell to a friend: cured, he must leave their shared sanctuary in the summerland and make his way back into the world.

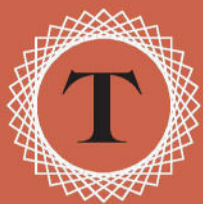
These paintings are destined for the new Nerdrum Museum, now open in Stavern, about 90 miles southwest of Oslo. The museum is a daring venture in the painter's twilight years. Aging gently, he turned 80 in April, and says he works only for legacy now; everything he makes in future will go directly into the museum's collection. The museum is a vast series of renovated halls built into two floors of a former match factory on the waterfront, a short drive from the barn. In the high spaces where explosive phosphorus was once carefully applied to sticks and packaged to bring the sustaining gift of fire and light to homes and hearths, now Nerdrum's profound paintings glow with the light of revelation, exposing the eternal fragility and strength of the human spirit. ●

Information: Visit nerdrum.com/museum to learn more about the new museum, which is directed by the Norwegian composer Martin Rømer (b. 1978).

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Dawn, 1989, oil on canvas, 75 x 111 1/2 in., private collection



TODAY'S
MASTERS

BY DAVID MASELLO

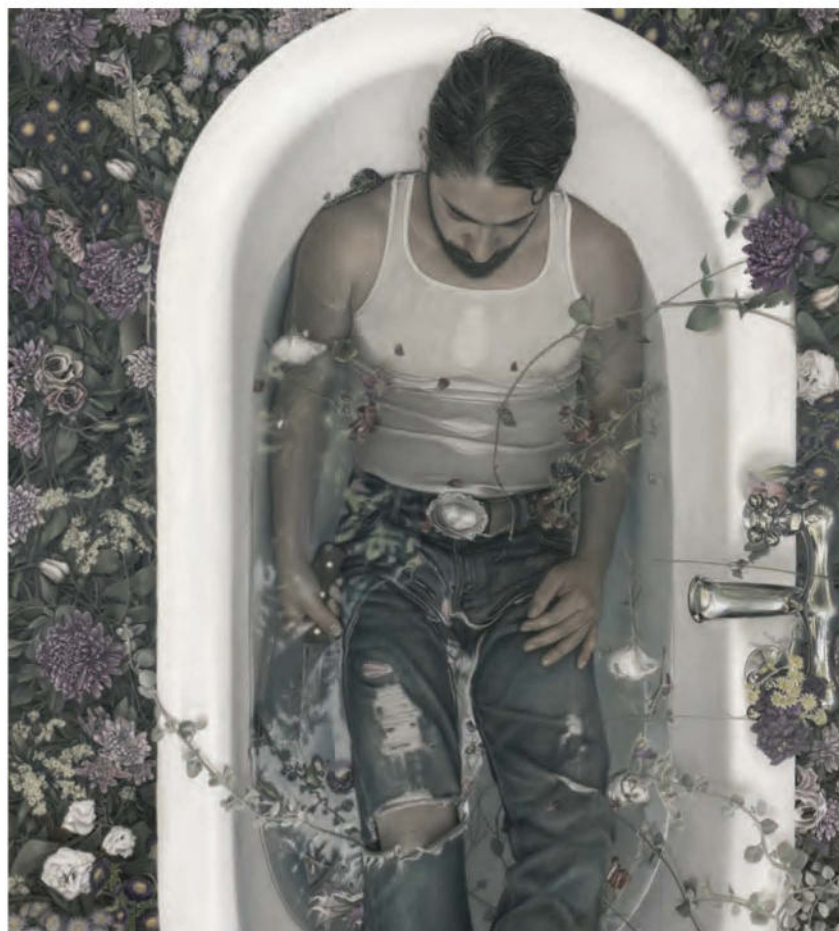
BEING REAL

The artworks of Sara Gallagher (b. 1990) sometimes come with an asterisk, actual fine print that defines what she does in case someone might be confused. When her San Francisco gallery, CK Contemporary, exhibits her works at *Art on Paper* in New York or the *San Francisco Art Fair*, it affixes the following two words: “Pencil drawing.”

As the gallery’s founder and director, Lauren Ellis, says of Gallagher’s work, which she has been showing since 2022, “At art fairs, where people are often walking past our booth and assume that many of our pieces are photographs, we find it helpful to put up that sign, especially for Sara. We make the type size large enough that people can read it from the aisle.”

So uncannily realistic are Gallagher’s drawings of people, rendered in graphite and PanPastel (a highly mixable dry pastel akin to what its manufacturer describes as “velvety paint”), that they are commonly mistaken for photographs. That confusion is about more than just the fact that she possesses the ability to render details with a keen verisimilitude, whether it’s the individual hairs on a head or the look that water assumes in a bathtub. Gallagher’s subjects wear expressions so real, poignant, complex, nuanced, true-to-life that anyone could easily make the mistake about the medium employed.

“From a technical standpoint, Sara’s skill is some of the best I’ve ever seen,” says Ellis, “but she’s able to



Without Sanctuary, 2023, graphite and PanPastel on paper, 34 1/2 x 31 1/4 in., CK Contemporary (San Francisco)



take that skill and create an emotionally rich beauty. Her figures tell intimate stories for us. While those stories are very specific, Sara captures emotions that are universal to humans.”

At her home studio in Nicasio, California (where Gallagher and her musician husband, Jacob Aranda, account for two of the town’s 98 residents), she can complete one drawing of a figure, imbued with a character and feelings we know to be accurate, in two to six weeks. “There is a little wiggle room, depending on the intricacy of the work,” she explains, “such as one of my recent pieces, *Without Sanctuary*, which is actually my husband posing in the tub. That took eight weeks to complete as the floral background was much more intricate than other, simpler backgrounds.” While that rendering of vines and flowers may have slowed the process, Gallagher was able to capture the mood of her sitter in less time, which is odd, given that the inner life should be the most labor-intensive and elusive to capture.

Surrounded by the towering redwood trees that grow an hour north of San Francisco, Gallagher draws every day, often beginning the morning with a walk through the mighty forest with her dog. “My actual pencil-to-paper time averages five to eight hours a day,” she says, “but I often end up working 12 hours, which includes thinking

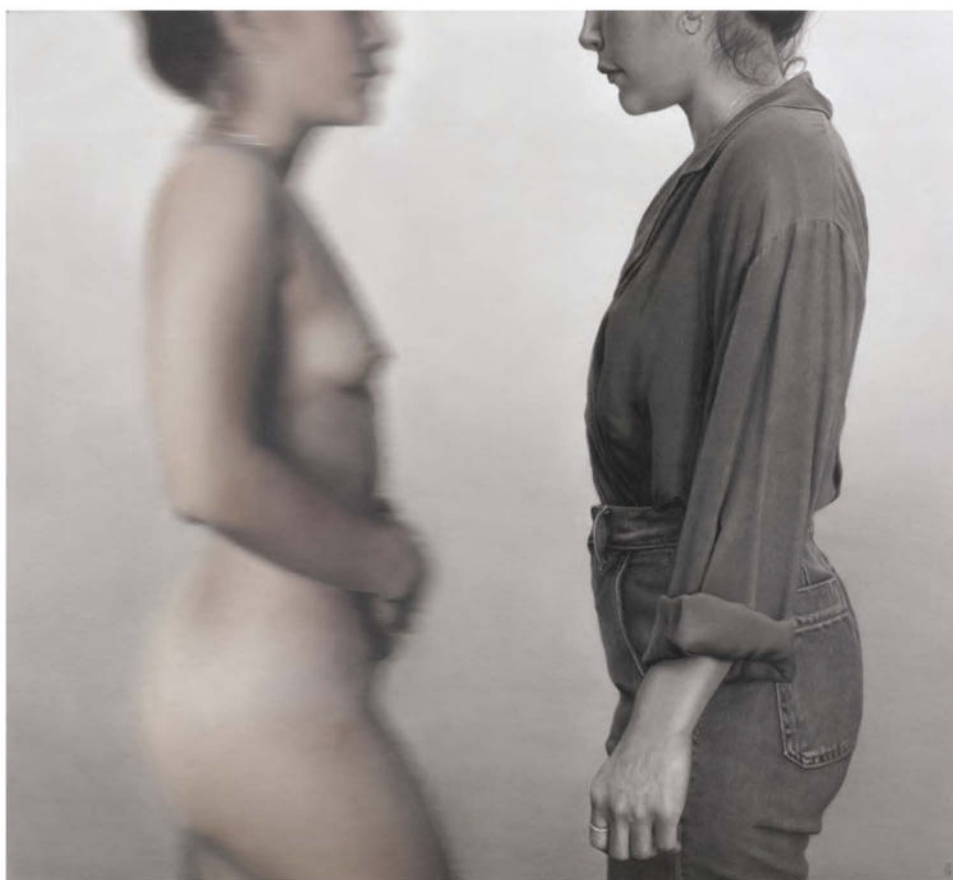
(TOP) *Let Them Fall*, 2023, graphite and PanPastel on paper, 23 x 30 in., CK Contemporary (San Francisco) ■ (LEFT) *Retrospect*, 2023, graphite and PanPastel on paper, 28 x 28 in., private collection



(ABOVE) *Hold Your Grief Gently*, 2022, pencil on paper, 20 x 40 in., private collection ■ (RIGHT) *The Work*, 2022, graphite and PanPastel on paper, 22 x 20 in., private collection

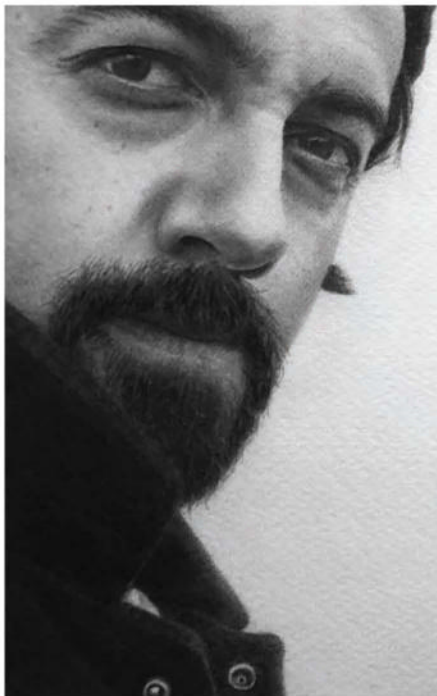
as I take walks or stop to play the banjo and sing some songs, mostly country tunes.” An added asterisk to her career might mention that she and Jacob are performers. He makes guitars by hand and plays them, while she strums the banjo as they both sing. Their two-week honeymoon through northern Italy in October 2022 doubled as a multi-town performance gig. “We had the tour booked before we even decided to marry,” she recalls. “Once we got married, we suddenly thought, ‘Well, we’ll make it our honeymoon tour.’”

Gallagher knows how to read people’s emotions and states of mind, then translate them through graphite and pastel. “My drawings are not a portrait of a person,” she emphasizes, “but, rather, portraits of an emotion or an emotional experience.” Indeed, to look at a recent work such as *Let Them Fall* is to see a contemplative woman in a bathtub who is metaphorically bathing away what Gallagher describes as her “mental clutter, which can become so prevalent that it seeps deep into our subconscious.” In *Retrospect*, a woman appears to literally be looking back, but in Gallagher’s view the figure is examining her past, “reminiscing on something that may have gone a different way.” And in *No Longer Mine*, another woman in a bathtub has, the artist explains, reached a point where hard work, an actual “hustle,” has resulted in the reaching of a goal. “When we work hard and succeed, the fruits of our labor separate from us, birthing something brand new into the world — and it’s beautiful.”



AN EMOTIONAL RESPONSE

While most artists seek out imagery to fill their blank sheets of paper, Gallagher searches for emotions. “Every single person has concerns about their physical health, but there is also mental health to consider,” she notes. “I work with individuals from the general public who reach out to me,” some indicating that they have experienced anxiety or fears, a pervasive sorrow, existential perplexity, or other emotional



Now with You, 2022, graphite on paper, 6 x 13 in., CK Contemporary (San Francisco)

depths they want to explore. When she finds them (and they are everywhere, since that is the human condition), Gallagher converses with them, winning their trust and confidence. Most of them, though not all, agree for her to photograph them, and she uses the resulting photographs to create her drawings. “I make sure they’re very comfortable when they agree to be photographed. I feed them, always give them a free print after the work is done, as well as a healthy friends-and-family discount!” Most important, she listens to their stories.

Despite the skill that artists may reveal, it’s not uncommon for many of them to continue searching for their ultimate medium and subject matter. Although Gallagher had worked as a thoroughly seasoned oil painter for years after graduating from San Francisco State University with an emphasis on painting, drawing, and photography, she felt something was missing. “I just wasn’t satisfied with my paintings,” she confesses, “and so I ended up seeking another medium. I wanted to push my skills somewhere else.” In 2019, she went to Germany to attend a rigorous graphite workshop led by Dirk Dzimirsky, the hyper-famous hyper-realist artist of our time. “Graphite clicked for me,” Gallagher recalls. “With this medium, I was finally able to translate what was in my head and the messages I wanted to convey.”

But while graphite allowed her to draw in a truly realistic manner, something was still missing: color. “I longed to have color, but I wasn’t willing to give up the medium of graphite,” a material noted, of course, for its monochromatic gray tones. “I kept asking myself, ‘What would work with graphite and that I would be happy to include?’” She found that PanPastels, as dry in consistency as graphite, were a way to introduce color. “When the pastels are mixed with graphite, which has a natural shimmer to it, I am able to bring in muted hues over everything.” The softness of the colors and the softness of the appearance of the pastels on paper reflect Gallagher’s desire to depict emotions in powerful yet gentle ways.

Because her materials are so fragile, Gallagher must frame the works behind glass. “It’s a bit of a bummer to have to do that,” she says, “but it’s museum-quality glass” with comparatively little

reflectiveness. To further protect the works, she uses a “workable fixative” throughout the drawing process, a sprayed concoction that keeps everything firmly in place on the paper.

Now, just two years into this new technical phase, Gallagher has emerged as a master of the form. Apart from her representation by CK Contemporary, she has received numerous awards and has been included in various exhibitions and collections, including the Bennett Collection of Women Figurative Realists, The Lunar Codex (through which some of her works will reach space in a time capsule), and the Art Renewal Center’s 16th International ARC Salon.

She has emerged from all of this with a new designation for her work: Emotional Realism. This aptly descriptive term was coined, in fact, by Scott Schryver, a sales consultant at CK Contemporary, who used it to describe what he saw. Now Ellis says, “‘Emotional Realism’ is often the term we use when describing Sara’s work to clients who walk in.”

Gallagher readily admits to why she has embraced depicting the “taboos that surround emotional and mental health.” She says, “To be honest, I had experienced a great deal of anxiety myself, so much so that I worked hard with a therapist to find the emotional tools to deal with it, to battle it, to fight and conquer the anxiety.” Through these sessions, Gallagher had what she considers an epiphany, in that once she understood her anxiety, she was able to shift the negativity into something “emotionally beautiful.”

Because she is, by nature, an empathetic person, she started thinking that by drawing others suffering from mental issues, she could help them. “My personal experience translated into curiosity about others and how to bring about a community of people, to let them know there are others suffering. The mission of my work that makes me feel so good is the hope that I am helping other people, connecting them and fostering a healing experience. I always want to include others in my process of making art. It’s about making it about them.” ●

DAVID MASELLO is executive editor of *MILIEU* magazine, and a writer about art and culture. He writes one-act plays, poetry, personal essays, and monologues, which he often performs.

2 ARTISTS, 1 TOWN, 10 PAINTINGS

The year was 1924, and an American artist named Isadore Levy was visiting the tiny town of Le Pouldu on the south coast of Brittany in France. As he sat at a table in a small inn awaiting his food, he began studying some murals that workmen had recently uncovered beneath layers of wallpaper. The proprietress was about to repaper the walls. But Levy spied a signature on one mural that would change everything: “P Go,” short for Paul Gauguin (1848–1903).¹

Levy came along at exactly the right moment to rescue an astonishing piece of art history. It turned out that Gauguin had lived in this very building — the Buvette de la Plage — between October 1889 and November 1890. The Buvette had a dining room and a taproom downstairs and three bedrooms upstairs, where Gauguin had lodged with his fellow artists Jacob Meyer de Haan, Paul Sérusier, and (later) Charles Filiger. Late in 1889, they had painted the dining room’s walls, ceiling, and even its windowpanes.² Now, before the murals could disappear from sight again, Levy purchased one of them from the landlady and persuaded two friends to purchase another (*Breton Girl Spin-*

ning). They paid for workmen to extract the murals, then re-plaster and paper the wall.

Gauguin and his entourage were the most famous artists to descend on Le Pouldu in the late 1880s. But they were not the only ones. A month before Gauguin moved into the Buvette de la Plage, another artist had taken up residence nearby at the Hôtel Destais. His name was William Sergeant



(RIGHT) **PAUL GAUGUIN**, *Breton Girl Spinning*, 1889, oil on plaster, 53 1/8 x 24 2/5 in., Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, s0513S2006 ■ (FAR RIGHT) **WILLIAM SERGEANT KENDALL**, *Two Young Gossips of Le Pouldu*, 1889, oil on canvas, 30 1/4 x 21 3/4 in., private collection, New York City, photo courtesy Michael Owen, Owen Gallery, New York City



(LEFT) PAUL GAUGUIN, *The Kelp Gatherers*, 1889, oil on canvas, 34 1/4 x 48 1/2 in., Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany, photo: Artothek ■ (BELOW) WILLIAM SERGEANT KENDALL, *Désirs*, 1892, oil on canvas, 68 3/4 x 58 1/4 in., Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., 1974.45, gift of Elisabeth Kendall Underwood



Kendall (1869–1938), and he was one of a number of American and British art students who came from Paris to Le Pouldu to paint during summer breaks. Born in what is now the Bronx, Kendall had trained at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts under Thomas Eakins and at the Art Students League of New York with Harry Siddons Mowbray. In Paris, he had

gained admission to the prestigious École des Beaux-Arts — quite a coup for an American in those days. But his stay in Brittany marked the first time in his life that he was free to hire his own models and choose his own subjects.

Le Pouldu nurtured not only Gauguin's radical experiments, but also Kendall's efforts, which were likewise striking, if more traditional. A new museum in Le Pouldu, set to open in the spring of 2025, will trace the outsized role of this tiny town in the art world of its day.³ But visitors seeking to retrace the steps of the artists can do so now. Next door to the site of the future museum is the Maison-Musée Gauguin, a faithful reconstruction of the Buvette de la Plage as it looked in Gauguin's time. And along the shore, visitors can take a walking tour comprising 19 stops, where they see the scenes that inspired Gauguin and other painters.

That a village with a population of 48 (281 if you include the contiguous hamlets) could draw so many artists may seem unlikely.⁴ But Le Pouldu offered cheap accommodations, a rugged coastline, unspoiled countryside, and ways of life that hadn't changed for generations, providing plenty of "motifs" for painters. Gauguin and Kendall were just two of the artists who walked the same paths, met the same people, and painted the same scenes, yet rendered them in very different ways.

A side-by-side comparison of five paintings by each of the two artists shows their different approaches. Illustrated here, each pair takes a specific theme related to life in Le Pouldu — spinning, harvesting seaweed, praying, and viewing the landscape or ocean — and shows how the two artists addressed it.

In this, his third stay in Brittany, Gauguin was pushing the boundaries of art — flattening perspective, moving away from naturalism, and eliminating all but the basic elements in a scene. He deliberately avoided sunlight and shadow, and he dispensed with the shading that creates the illusion of three dimensions, favoring instead solid blocks of color. This style became known as synthetism. Although he had formulated its principles with Émile Bernard in nearby Pont-Aven the previous year, Le Pouldu provided Gauguin with the time and space to fully develop these ideas. Here he would depict sand as red (as in *The Wave*) and stylize the image of a spinner so much that we can barely make out her distaff and spindle (*Breton Girl Spinning*).



(ABOVE) **PAUL GAUGUIN**, *Adam and Eve, or Paradise Lost*, c. 1890, oil on canvas, 18 1/8 x 20 3/8 in., Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, 1971.144, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin E. Bensinger, B.A. 1928 ■ (BELOW) **WILLIAM SERGEANT KENDALL**, *Saint Yves, Pray for Us*, 1890–91, oil on canvas, 38 1/2 x 42 1/2 in., private collection, photo courtesy Lawrence Steigrad Fine Arts, New York City



(ABOVE) **PAUL GAUGUIN**, *Landscape at Le Pouldu*, 1890, oil on canvas, 27 7/8 x 36 3/8 in., National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1983.1.20, collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon ■ (BELOW) **WILLIAM SERGEANT KENDALL**, *The Glory of Fair Promise*, 1892, oil on canvas, 36 x 36 in., private collection, New Jersey



Kendall may have steered clear of such “suddenly born aesthetic fancies,” yet his approach was also modern.⁵ He, too, stripped scenes down to their essentials, eliminating Victorian-era fussiness, and he made excellent use of negative space (as in *Saint Yves, Pray for Us*). His religious pictures weren’t Biblical tableaux like those of the past, but scenes of real people in real places. Where Gauguin layered his religious paintings with symbolism (*Adam and Eve, or Paradise Lost*), Kendall captured the raw emotion of an impoverished young woman imploring St. Yves, the Breton protector of the poor and of orphans, to help her. In a radical move, Kendall even lopped off the saint’s head, apparently feeling that a wooden statue in a church was less important than the young woman’s expression of faith. This painting won an honorable mention at the Paris Salon of 1891.



“*Saint Yves* has wall power,” says Peggy Stone of Lawrence Steigrad Fine Arts (Manhattan), which recently acquired and then sold the painting to a private collector. She contrasts *Saint Yves* with another painting offered by the gallery that “screams 19th century, with a beautiful mother and lovely children — it’s pretty, but that’s all.” By contrast, she says, *Saint Yves* feels edgy and modern. “Kendall was a man out of his time, a forward-thinking painter,” she notes.⁶

Gauguin’s pictures fascinate, and they represent an important step in the development of art, paving the way for fauvism and other styles. But Kendall’s best works practically leap off the canvas. *The Glory of Fair Promise*, one of several paintings of apple trees he made in Brittany in 1892, combines flat brushwork for the grass with thick impasto for the dense clusters of pinkish white flowers. The branches, laden with



(ABOVE) **PAUL GAUGUIN**, *The Wave*, 1888, oil on canvas, 24 x 29 in., private collection
 ■ (RIGHT) **WILLIAM SERGEANT KENDALL**, *On a Cliff by the Sea—Le Pouldu*, 1890, oil on canvas, 17 x 13 in., unlocated, photo courtesy Michael Owen, Owen Gallery, New York City

blossoms, bend in a breathtaking sweep that's heightened by the sunlight striking the branches. Only after taking in all of this do we notice a figure in the shade below. This painting earned Kendall a medal at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893.

Kendall would go on to become dean of the Yale School of the Fine Arts (1913–22) and a National Academician (associate membership in 1901 and full membership four years later). He became known for his portraits, especially of children. In the early 2000s, one crooked art dealer in Vero Beach, Florida, even passed off a couple of Kendall's studies as the work of Mary Cassatt (and was sentenced to seven years in prison for various swindles).⁷ Yet Kendall's pictures never give in to sentimentality, as paintings of children so often do. One could argue that he learned that approach in *Le Pouldu*, where the realities of life were harsh, despite the presence of great beauty.

In *The Kelp Gatherers*, Gauguin represents a major occupation in *Le Pouldu* — seaweed harvesting. In the autumn, when storms would tear kelp loose from the seabed, peasants would collect it to use as fertilizer on their farms. While Gauguin's style is pathbreaking, his subject matter is traditional. Kendall's approach is exactly the opposite. His style is traditional, but the subject is not. In *Désirs*, his kelp gatherers are not at the beach at all, but back at the farm, where one of them rests on a wheelbarrow full of seaweed. She gazes into the distance, wearied by “the thousand little incidents and accidents of life,” as Kendall put it, complete with the constant struggle, fatigue, and longing for rest that come with such an existence. But Kendall hated trying to describe his paintings and the meaning behind them. He concluded:

*What is the good of painting an idea if it can be expressed in words? The only excuse of existence of a picture is that it expresses some thought or idea or feeling that can be expressed in no other way. That is the canon of art.*⁸

For once, Gauguin would likely have agreed with him. ●

Information: *The Maison-Musée Gauguin* (open April–October) is located at 10 rue des Grands Sables in *Le Pouldu*. Its website, maisonmuseegauguin.blogspot.com/p/pratique.html, includes visitor information, brief histories of the *Buvette* and the painters who lived there, and a map of “the painters’ path” walking tour.



ANNE UNDERWOOD is a longtime writer and editor for a variety of publications. She is a great-granddaughter of William Sergeant Kendall and is writing a book about him, based on her research on his artwork, journals, letters, family photos, and other archival material.

Notes

- 1 Author's written communication with Maud Naour, director of the Maison-Musée Gauguin in *Le Pouldu*.
- 2 The four walls were fully decorated by December 13, 1889, according to Gauguin's *Nirvana: Painters at Le Pouldu 1889–1890* (Eric M. Zafran, ed., p. 64). This book includes a complete description of the murals on pp. 64–67.
- 3 Author's interview with Maud Naour.
- 4 Archives départementales du Finistère. Recensements de population, 1886.
- 5 Kendall's interview with Montrose J. Moses in preparation for Moses's article “William Sergeant Kendall: Philosopher of Form and Color,” *Hearst's Magazine*, Jan 1916. The quote did not appear in the final copy, which was significantly edited. The early draft is in the New-York Historical Society (N-YHS) files on Kendall, Box 1.
- 6 Author's interview with Peggy Stone of Lawrence Steigrad Fine Arts.
- 7 Author's interview with Robert Austin, who presented proof for the trial that Matthew Taylor had doctored Kendall's work. Also, author's interview with the Los Angeles collector who purchased the two studies after being led to believe they were by Mary Cassatt. The items in question were studies for Kendall's paintings *Mrs. Hoyt and Her Children* and *Il Penseroso*.
- 8 Kendall's journal, May 4, 1892; N-YHS, box 4.

WALTER H. EVERETT RECOVERING A MASTER ILLUSTRATOR

Perhaps the most singular event in the life and career of Walter H. Everett (1880–1946) was the day in 1935 when he set fire to many, perhaps most, of his own paintings and drawings. A student of the renowned illustrator Howard Pyle (1853–1911), Everett had been a highly successful illustrator himself, producing covers and inside-the-book art for *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Good Housekeeping*, *McCall's*, and *Woman's Home Companion*, as well as other popular publications.

But it all ended in 1935, when he decided to terminate his illustration career, apparently with some bitterness. Was he depressed? Did he have a mental breakdown? Had he wanted to be accepted as a fine artist, rather than as an illustrator (to some, a second-tier pursuit)? Had his later work deteriorated in quality, as some have posited, spurring him to destroy it all? At the time, Everett was separated from his wife, the result of his cheating on her with his models. Perhaps he was ensuring she wouldn't get any artworks in a divorce settlement? (In fact, they never did divorce and she returned to live with him, but she certainly held a grudge.) Almost 90 years after the fire, we can only speculate.

Not everything was destroyed. Sometime after his death, his son, Oliver Everett, discovered 35 or 40 oil paintings on canvas rolled up in a barn on Walter's property. "I have always been told that the works recovered from the barn were not burned essentially because Walter forgot about them. They were rolled up in the rafters," says Olivia Everett Dodd, Walter's great-granddaughter. "He had cut them off their stretchers in order to reuse the stretchers and just forgot they were there." These salvaged works were dispersed among various members of the Everett family, then eventually reassembled by Mark Everett, Oliver's son. This "Mark Everett Family Collection" was donated to the Walter H. Everett Foundation in 2023.



Cover of the October 15, 1904 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*



Skirmish aboard a Ship, 1932, oil on canvas, 26 x 36 in., illustration for "Strange Rescue" by Elinor Mordaunt, *Woman's Home Companion*, May 1932 issue

That collection was almost lost to fire itself when wildfires ravaged parts of Northern California in 2017, reaching the house where Mark lived with his wife, Gloria. "Fortunately," Dodd explains, "before their house burned down, the only thing my parents grabbed was the art. It was 10:30 at night and they were ripping art off the walls and putting it in their car," says Dodd, who is now chief executive officer of the Walter H. Everett Foundation. Two oils were lost, as well as all of the drawings, Walter's collection of arrowheads (he liked to fashion arrowheads from stones), and his brushes, the bristles of which he had reshaped to allow him to paint in his own way.

The collection today contains several dozen oils on canvas, some sketches and tear sheets that happened to have been framed, and some studies in gouache, oils, and watercolors. The mission of the foundation is to spread the word about Walter Everett to a world that has heard of the Golden Age of American Illustration (from the 1880s through the early 1930s), when painters enlivened magazines and books until photography took over — but now generally associates it with Norman Rockwell, J.C. Leyendecker, Howard Pyle, N.C. Wyeth, and Maxfield Parrish.

To achieve this goal, the foundation shows examples of Everett's work on its website and Instagram, ultimately aiming to display them in actual galleries or museums. Supporting the foundation are funds contributed by Mark Everett, who chairs the board of directors, and there are plans to sell reproductions of the paintings, but not the originals.

Dodd says, "Our goal is to make reproductions available to the public for educational purposes. We have already been selling reproductions on canvas and some museum-quality giclées on canvas, as well as paper prints. Then someday we would love to put together a book, which is often requested by those who follow us on Instagram."

Like every savvy foundation chair, Dodd has been developing a board of kindred spirits who can help advance the organization's work. The Chinese-born, U.S.-based artist Vincent Xeus (b. 1981) is one such board member, and he has been covered in the pages of *Fine Art Connoisseur* several times. Xeus says, "The foundation's mission to preserve Walter's surviving works and to honor his legacy holds great significance. I remember being mesmerized when I first discovered his drawings, most of which, sadly, were lost in the Napa fire. Art reflects and conveys lives beyond time. The representational art community can be enriched by learning about Walter's works and life, for he is one of the now-hidden giants upon whose shoulders generations of artists have stood."

The expending of such energy and passion for a man Mark, Olivia, and Vincent never met is remarkable. So who was this guy?

A UNIQUE LIFE

Walter was one of 10 children born to George and Jane Everett in the town of Haddonfield, New Jersey. His parents had emigrated from England, and his father worked as a typesetter, "a respectable job," Dodd notes. When Walter exhibited artistic talent, his parents encouraged him to go into illustration "because they thought it was a way that he could both pursue his interests and make a good living." At 17, he enrolled at Philadelphia's Drexel Institute of Art, Science & Industry (later Drexel University), where Pyle had been teaching since 1894.



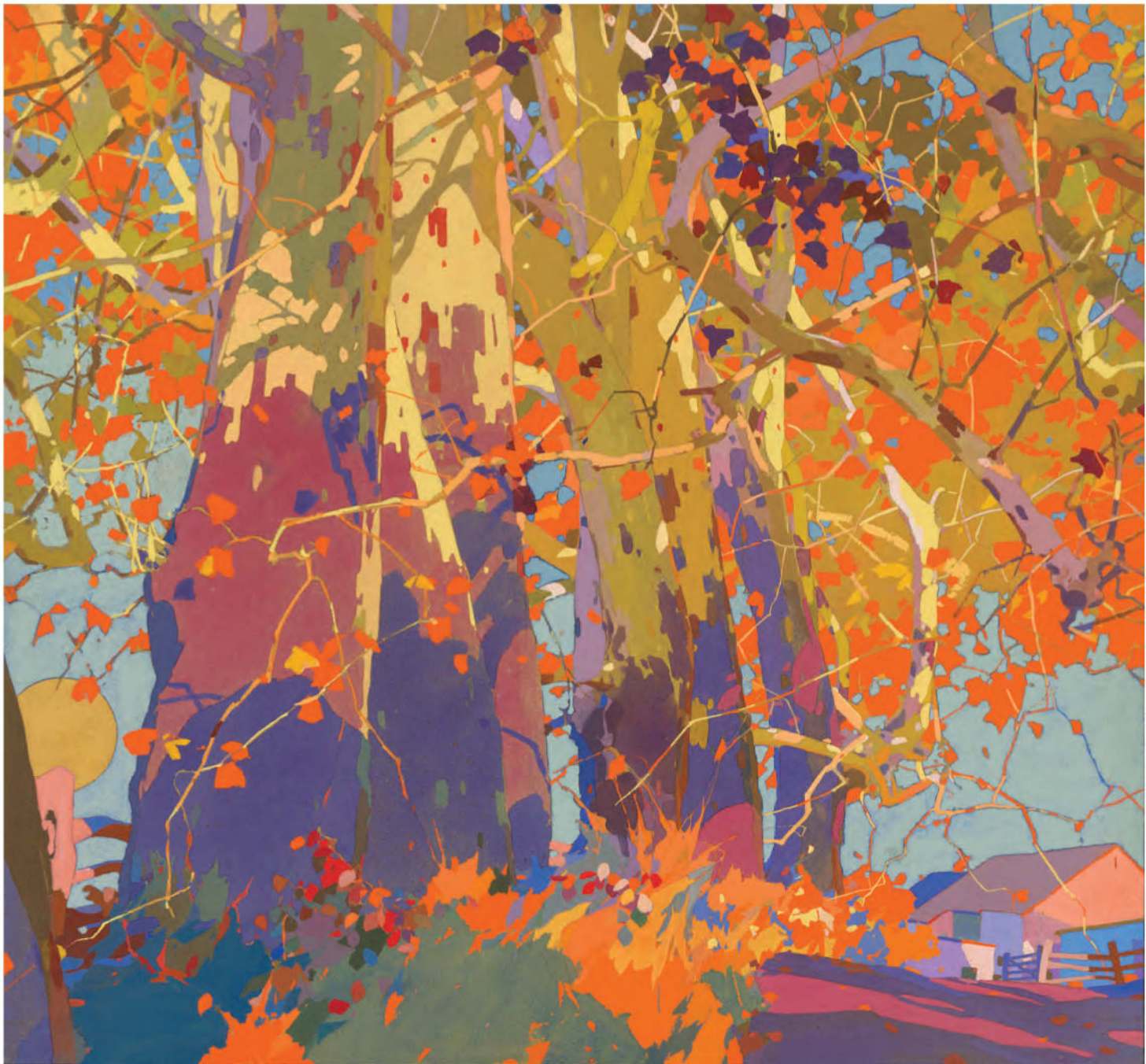
Couple in a Canoe, c. 1930, gouache on paper mounted on board, 14 x 20 in., illustration for "Bitter Sweet" by Katherine Newlin Burt, *McCall's*, July 1930 issue

Pyle stands at the pinnacle of American illustration. He wrote and illustrated books for children (among them *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, *Men of Iron*, and *The Story of King Arthur and His Knights*), and he illustrated others' stories in such popular magazines as *Harper's*. Pyle's colorful, realistic images of medieval subjects and pirates influenced other illustrators, and eventually Hollywood set and costume designers. His teaching emphasized not so much technique, which he assumed that students would glean from other sources, as "how to go about making a picture," says Roger Reed, president of the art dealership Illustration House. He continues, "Pyle's most famous contribution was psychological, akin to method acting. He would challenge his students to mentally place themselves at the scene they were depicting, and observe what must be happening, to research the back story in order to predict its outcome, and to inhabit the characters so as to live in the picture." Among his students were some of the most renowned illustrators of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including N.C. Wyeth, Frank Schoonover, and Jessie Willcox Smith.

Pan Playing Flute, c. 1930, oil on canvas, 29 1/2 x 25 1/2 in., illustration for "Take a Look at Life," *Redbook*, July 1930 issue



By 1900, Pyle was ready to move on. According to Alice A. Carter, a longtime illustrator and professor emeritus of illustration at San Jose State University, Drexel had an open admissions policy, but Pyle wanted to select his own students. The school also wanted him to teach more days each week, which interfered with his own work, so he left to start his own school in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. (It was



Trees on the Farm (or The Sycamores), n.d., oil on canvas, 26 x 24 in.

located near the Brandywine River, so his operation came to be called the Brandywine School.) Pyle recognized real talent in Walter Everett and invited him to join him.

At the time, the U.S. had very few art museums, so magazines and books were the principal way in which most Americans saw art of any kind. Essentially, there was no distinction made between fine art and illustration because the latter was so prevalent. Everett's earliest illustrations were competent but "stiff," Carter says — "a lot of detail but not a lot of movement" — but eventually his style and approach to composition began to "loosen up."

His cover for the October 15, 1904 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post* exemplifies Everett's earlier phase and was certainly his first major piece, though it's unlikely his original painting for it exists anymore.

Here we see a pale, round-faced young woman wearing a robe that might hark back to ancient Greece (or Roman women celebrated by the 19th-century painter Lawrence Alma-Tadema), holding grapes freshly picked from an arbor. It's a competent work, not overly burdened with detail and colors. What makes it of interest, Reed notes, is less the image itself and more that it was "reproduced in two printing inks only, a blue and an orange." The four-color printing process — dubbed CMYK for cyan, magenta, yellow, and key (black) — wasn't "standardized at that point, and every trip of a sheet of paper through the printing press was expensive, so there was a widespread effort by engravers to get a full-color effect out of two or three inks."

In time, Everett's style became more identifiable and included flat areas of color, a sense of movement, and figures making gestures that were more or less exaggerated. We see this in *Skirmish aboard a Ship*, which appeared in the May 1932 issue of *Woman's Home Companion*, illustrating a story ("Strange Rescue") by Elinor Mordaunt, and also in *Couple in a Canoe*, which illustrated a story ("Bitter Sweet") by



Indian Summer, 1934, oil on canvas, 29 1/2 x 47 3/4 in., illustration for "Indian Summer" by Brooke Hanlon, *Ladies' Home Journal*, November 1934 issue

Katherine Newlin Burt in the July 1930 *McCall's*. (Made 26 years after that *Saturday Evening Post* cover, *Couple in a Canoe* still relies on just blue and orange, Reed notes, reflecting Everett's "parsimonious discipline.")

Pan Playing Flute, an oil painting made for a story ("Take a Look at Life") in the July 1930 *Redbook*, seemingly has little going on: the mischievous Greek god Pan lulls a young woman to sleep in the woods with his music. But in fact there's quite a lot happening visually: bright sunlight peeks through tree leaves (depicted in a range of colors) and bounces off the grass and flora, while a rabbit makes an appearance at left bottom. Patches of solid color that come together to evoke a landscape became a signature element for Everett. The undated oil on board *Trees on the Farm* was likely a "personal work," Dodd suggests — i.e., not commissioned for a magazine.

CHANGES AND CHALLENGES

Everett's heyday coincided with the arrival of European modernism in America, most notably via the touring

Armory Show of 1913, which introduced Braque, Brancusi, Duchamp, Matisse, and Picasso to residents of New York City, Chicago, and Boston. It is likely that Everett saw it somewhere, but its appeal to him was probably limited. Everett "was very rigorous in his draftsmanship and had little interest in high modernism as it lost touch with fidelity to nature," notes Kevin Ferrara, an illustrator who has written extensively about Everett. (If anything, Everett might have been influenced by Art Nouveau, a decorative trend that captivated the world around 1900.) Ferrara says Pyle told his students — and Everett absorbed this lesson well — that artists should "try to express deeply felt emotions underneath the narrative," noting that "any emotion was fair game, any mood.



Preparatory drawing for *Indian Summer*, c. 1934, graphite on vellum, 8 x 14 in.



Olivia Everett Dodd and her father, Mark Everett, with *Indian Summer* after it was pledged to the foundation (along with two other works) by the artist's great grandnephew, Doug Jones

They were taught to be artists first, and commercial second. Pyle said, "Get money for your work, but do not work for money."

Like Pyle, Everett worked for magazines and taught his own students. One of the latter, Henry Pitz (1895–1976), did the same thing, and indeed, one of his students was Alice Carter. She maintains that Everett "was one of Pyle's best students, certainly one of his most creative." He did not manage his time as well as Pyle did, however; meeting editors' deadlines was an ongoing problem. Reed recalls seeing a photograph of a painting "taken unfinished off his easel due to the art director being impatient," and Carter knows that Everett sometimes "had his students bring his paintings by train to New York City when they were still wet." Ferrara adds that Everett was "quite mercurial and did both masterpieces and a lot of slapdash work on deadline."

He was also restless, moving quite a bit, living in Philadelphia during his 30s, then residing in Audubon, New Jersey, and Middletown, Delaware. He spent some time in San Diego around 1918, but not long. By 1946, when he died of a heart attack (coronary thrombosis), he was living on a farm in Parker Ford, Pennsylvania, that was owned by a relative or in-law.

In the mid-1930s, when Everett was in his 50s, his career came to an end, and if he ever explained in a diary or letter what spurred him

to incinerate all those paintings, that document is lost. What remains is the art he didn't burn — his sole legacy. Without the fire, Carter notes, there would have been more for collectors to admire and buy, elevating his standing in American art, not just in illustration.

In 1999 and 2000, the exhibition *Norman Rockwell: Pictures for the American People* visited major museums in cities nationwide, including Atlanta, San Diego, and even the Guggenheim in New York City, which (ironically) was founded to display "non-objective" art. Perhaps in Olivia Dodd's mind is the idea that museum shows of her great-grandfather will move him into the pantheon of top American artist-illustrators. But one reason Rockwell is so well-known, Carter warns, that "there are many collectors of his drawings, preliminaries, and finished paintings who spend millions of dollars whenever the artist's work comes up for sale." Alas, the fires of 1935 and 2017 may have robbed Everett of that outcome. ●

Information: walterheverett.com

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THE POWER OF SELECTION

THE FRENCH FAMILY'S ART COLLECTION AT CHESTERWOOD

Art has long been considered a commodity, a way to show off personal net worth and pave a path into higher echelons of society. Thus the field of art collecting has often been dominated by those with enormous means, and so it is hardly surprising that most scholarly attention has been directed to their acquisitions.

Comparatively overlooked, however, are the collections formed by artists themselves, who often seek to feed their creative souls, decorate their studios and domestic living spaces, and gather tokens of treasured personal relationships. For example, the sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848–1907) adorned his New Hampshire home with artworks by fellow Cornish Colony artists such as Thomas Wilmer Dewing; a portrait of his wife, Augusta, and their son, Homer, by John Singer Sargent; and a tasteful mix of Flemish tapestries, Japanese prints, commercial plaster casts, and art from his travels abroad. In Falmouth, Virginia, the home and studio of Gari Melchers (1860–1932) now holds over 400 works amassed by that painter and his wife. Perhaps the best-known artist/collector of that era was William Merritt Chase (1849–1916), who enlivened his Manhattan studio with richly patterned textiles, paintings, and decorative objects.¹ Aesthetically curated studios like Chase's functioned as social spaces for regaling patrons while projecting the artist's persona and cosmopolitan taste.

Visitors to Chesterwood, the historic home, studio, and gardens of sculptor Daniel Chester French (1850–1931) in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, rightly expect to see French's maquettes and models related to his well-known monuments and memorials, as well as portraits and allegorical works. What may surprise them is discovering that French was also interested in interior design and an avid collector of textiles, eclectic furniture, commercial plaster casts, Old Master paintings, and art by friends, colleagues, and other contemporary artists.

Today, the Chesterwood collection includes important sculptures by Saint-Gaudens, Herbert Adams, Evelyn Beatrice Longman, and Bessie Potter Vonnoh, as well as notable paintings by American impressionist Robert Vonnoh, portraitist John C. Johansen, and visionary Abbott Handerson Thayer. The collection also has many works



Interior of Daniel Chester French's Concord studio, c. 1885, photograph by Alfred Winslow Hosmer, Courtesy William Munroe Special Collections, Concord Free Public Library, Concord, MA

by French's assistants, friends and family, lesser-known artists, and unknown makers. Nestled in the scenic Berkshire hills, Chesterwood may be the largest repository of works by a single sculptor, but it also represents an artistic family's vision of curating a creative environment.

RIGHT FROM THE START

Early in his career, working in Florence in the mid-1870s, French wrote to his father of his frustrated art collecting attempts: "...unless you happen to have a certain amount of ready money you cannot afford to purchase. ... I have neither the money, nor the time, nor the power of selection that I wish I had."² Upon his return to the U.S., he lived in Washington, D.C., where, thanks to his father's position in the U.S.



Vincenzo Camuccini (1771–1844) and Tommaso Piroli (1752–1824) after Antonio Canova (1757–1822), *Death of Priam*, 1794–95, hand-colored engraving, 9 x 17 in., Chesterwood Works on Paper Collection, Chapin Library, Williams College, Gift of the National Trust for Historic Preservation / Chesterwood, A National Trust Historic Site, Stockbridge, MA



Chesterwood studio "cozy corner," c. 1930s, showing German-school *Madonna and Child with St. Dominic* (NT 69.38.852); Lorenzo di Bicci / Florentine School, *Saint James and Two Female Saints* (NT 69.38.851); and Evelyn Beatrice Longman's bronze *Torso* (NT 69.38.567); photograph from Chesterwood Archives, Chapin Library, Williams College, Gift of the National Trust for Historic Preservation / Chesterwood, A National Trust Historic Site, Stockbridge, MA

Treasury Department, French won commissions for sculpture for new government buildings in St. Louis, Philadelphia, and Boston. He often traveled back to his hometown of Concord, Massachusetts, and with money now in the bank, he built a sculpture studio next to the family home. Finally commencing his collecting journey, he filled that studio with "pretty things" and asked his friend Ellen Ball to pick up "any old rags (rich & handsome) that you see lying about Florence."³ A later photograph of French's Concord studio shows it completely filled with artworks ranging from plaster busts and screens to tapestries and pottery.

A popular way for young artists to perfect their talents was to trade portraits. In this way, one of the first artworks French acquired was by Benjamin Curtis Porter (1843–1908), who would develop a successful career as a society portraitist. Acquaintances through William Rimmer's drawing classes in Boston, the two artists decided to swap portraits in 1874. French excitedly reported to his brother: "Porter yesterday made the proposition to me, that if I would make a bust of him, he would make a portrait in oils of me ... He certainly makes the best pictures I know of."⁴ This endeavor was put on hold as the two traveled to Italy. Although they saw each other often there, it wasn't until they later took up studios in Boston that the portraits were finally executed. In August 1877, French told his sister that he had "... the bust well under way. It is even now a good likeness & promises well. My portrait is also progressing, and being by Porter will undoubtedly be good."⁵ French always kept Porter's accomplished portrait and displayed it in the dining room at Chesterwood; at the time it had as much cachet as a portrait by Sargent. Today French's bronze bust of Porter is owned by New York University.

Over time and with more disposable income, French developed a more refined "power of selection" to create a notable collection for his homes in New York City and Stockbridge. A photograph of the Manhattan townhouse on West 11th Street shows framed works lining the walls; his wife, Mary Adams French, is a secondary blur within their tastefully curated interior. As his sculpting career gained traction, so did French's involvement in art clubs, societies, and philanthropic institutions. He



Unknown, possibly Flemish, *Adoration of the Shepherds* (fragment), 1600s, oil on wood, 49 x 28 in., Chesterwood, Gift of the Daniel Chester French Foundation, NT 69.38.854; photo: Williamstown Art Conservation & Preservation Center ■ (BELOW) ALBIN POLASEK (Czech-American, 1879–1965), *Forest Idyll*, 1924, bronze, 25 x 16 3/4 x 6 1/4 in. Chesterwood, Bequest of Margaret French Cresson, NT 73.45.1426; photo: Gregory Cherin

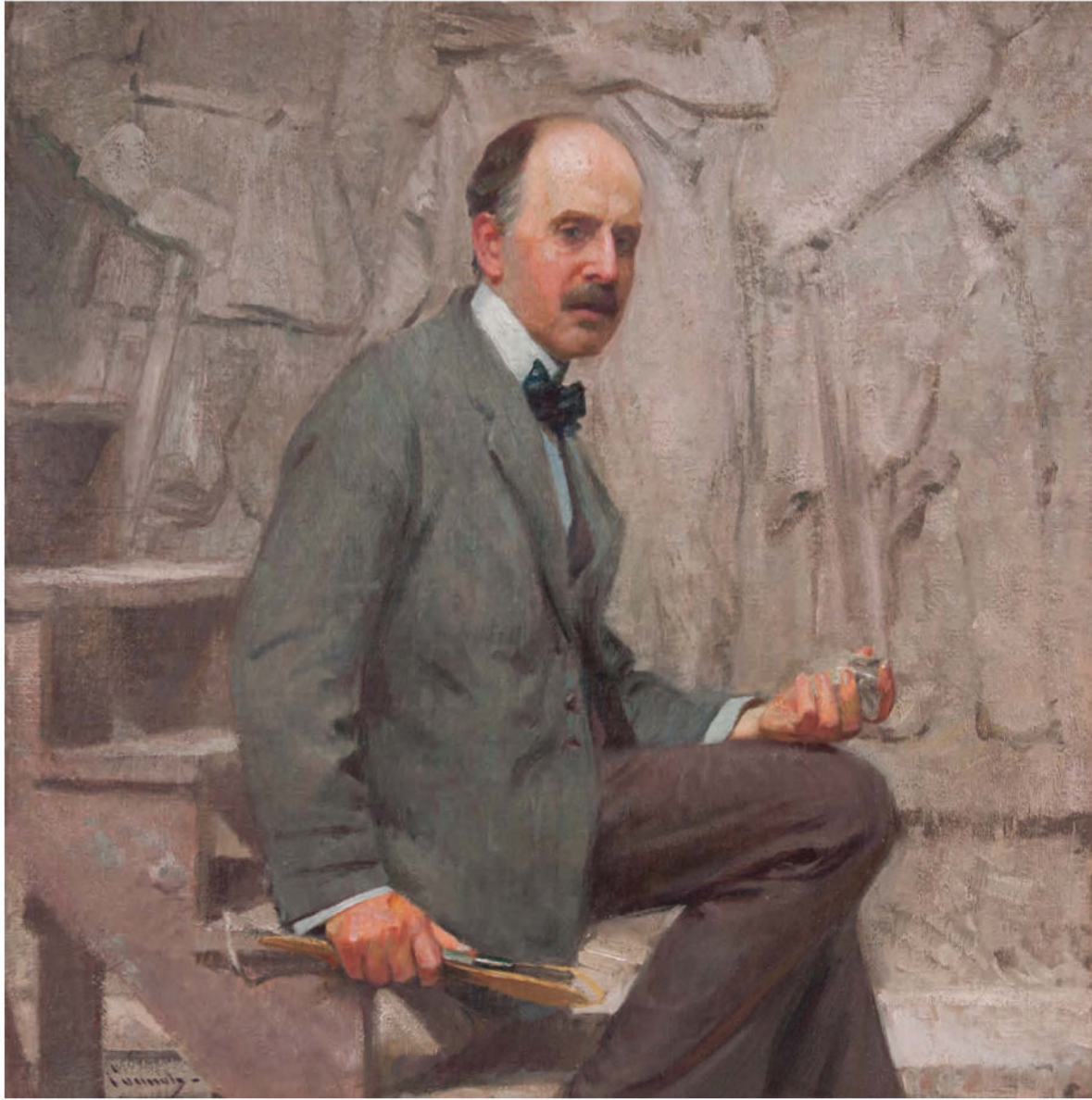


Left to right: William Penn Cresson, Margaret French Cresson, Mary Adams French, Daniel Chester French, 1929; Chesterwood Archives, Chapin Library, Williams College; photo: *The Boston Post*, Boston, MA

exhibited nationwide and sat on selection committees for exhibitions and competitions. His circle grew to include not only fellow sculptors, but painters, architects, and interior and landscape designers.

Thus his art collection grew as well. He had met Abbott Handerson Thayer in New York in 1872; visiting Paris in 1876, the two “talked art & roamed through the galleries,” activities that could only have improved French’s appreciation for fine art.⁶ He eventually acquired four works by Thayer, including a marvelous self-portrait of the painter presented to French in 1882–83, and the tender *Old Sailmaker*, which French later hung in the study at Chesterwood. In 1889 French visited Thayer at his home in Dublin, New Hampshire, where the sculptor, who enjoyed painting in his leisure time, worked on his own canvases “under Thayer’s eye.” French often acquired works directly from other living artists, such as a series of dream-like oil paintings of women dancing by Theodore Baur; moody, atmospheric forest scenes by Robert Loftin Newman; and a sensitive portrait of a girl by tonalist George Fuller.

French developed his art appreciation by reading and clipping images from magazines, purchasing photographic reproductions of famous paintings and sculpture in European museums, and visiting exhibitions and artists’ studios. In 1885, he attended an exhibition of paintings by the British symbolist George Frederic Watts at the Metropolitan Museum of



ROBERT VONNOH (1858–1933), *Daniel Chester French in the Chesterwood Studio*, 1913, oil on canvas, 31 x 32 in., Chesterwood, Gift of the Daniel Chester French Foundation, NT 69.38.786; photo: Cassandra Sohn

Art. “Roused to a high pitch of enthusiasm,” French wrote his father, “they are very strange and very powerful, not to be measured by any ordinary standard, impressing you with the fact that there was a man of genius behind them.”⁸ In London a year later, he visited Sargent’s studio, where he saw *Madame X*. French called it a “powerful picture, but a disagreeable one to me as most of his things are—but he does know how to paint. I am very glad to know him.”⁹ On a later European trip, he spent a day in Brussels to see the “marvellous [sic] collection of Flemish paintings that they have brought together there,—100 Rubens and 100 Van Dykes [sic] among them.”¹⁰ French greatly admired Antonio Canova’s work in Venice, where he saw “some statues ... the best that I have seen of his I think.”¹¹ He might have marveled at Canova’s masterful bas-relief *Death of Priam* and was moved to purchase a tinted engraving made after it by Vincenzo Camuccini and Tommaso Piroli, the added color heightening the already exaggerated gestures, raw emotions, and epic tragedy.

With Yankee frugality, French enjoyed antiquing in New York and the Berkshires; his daughter Margaret French Cresson recalled, “My Father would buy things wherever he saw them in an auction room or an

antique shop. They were almost always ‘unknowns’ as he was not buying many originals. But being an artist himself, he knew enough to buy good things.”¹² One “good thing” he snagged at auction was a German school *Madonna and Child with St. Dominic* that he displayed in his New York studio, where it announced his good taste to visitors.¹³ After the 1921 sale of that townhouse, French moved the altarpiece to the reception room in the Stockbridge studio. Now considered the most important Old Master painting at Chesterwood, the original remains safely in storage while a reproduction in the original frame hangs in its place.

Other works French purchased at auction include a Flemish school *Entombment of Christ* and two portraits then attributed to Peter Lely, *Lady Frances Hamilton* and the *Duchess of Portsmouth*.¹⁴ He hung these, along with *Frau Maria Koerter* after Marten Jacobsz van Heemskerck the Elder, and *Portrait of a Court Lady* attributed to Thomas Hudson, alongside likenesses of his own ancestors and contemporary portraits of the French family by William H. Hyde, John C. Johansen, and Robert Vonnoh. Together they created visual connections between the U.S. and Europe, the present and the past, and real and imagined pedigree.



HERBERT ADAMS (1858–1945), *La Jeunesse*, modeled c. 1894, cast c. 1899, glazed terracotta, 20 1/4 x 27 1/4 x 9 7/8 in., Chesterwood, Gift of the Daniel Chester French Foundation, NT 69.38.3710; photo: Gregory Cherin

As a member of the Grand Central Art Galleries in New York City, French was entitled to throw his name into an annual lottery. In 1924, he won Albin Polasek's bronze *Forest Idyll*, which features a young woman holding a faun while its mother looks on. French wrote Polasek: "I consider myself very fortunate that I have drawn ... your charming bronze group. It is a delightful piece of sculpture and I shall value it not only for itself but as an example of a man whom I value as a friend and respect very much as a sculptor."¹⁵ He proudly displayed it in his new Gramercy Park apartment. Later, French's daughter installed it on Chesterwood's breakfast porch; it is now on view in the Collections Gallery at Chesterwood.

A FAMILY LEGACY

The collection also grew with objects bestowed by members of the French family, who had deep roots in New England's colonial past. While the Frenches were not wealthy by Gilded Age standards, many held prestigious positions in banking, law, and government; names on the family tree include Stuyvesant, Vanderbilt, and the Barony of Cheylesmore. French was proud of this heritage and prominently displayed family heirlooms, including a silhouette of Judge Daniel French (1769–1840) in Chesterwood's main hallway. A paternal uncle, Phineas P. Wells, with whom French had stayed in Brooklyn in the early 1870s, left him a small but fine collection of early Italian and Old Master paintings purchased on a European trip in the 1850s, including a Pisan School *Madonna and Child* and a magnificent Florentine School gold ground panel painting, *Saint James and Two Female Saints*. French displayed the Florentine painting in his Concord studio and later in the cozy corner of his studio at Chesterwood.

Artists flocked to Chesterwood for pleasure and inspiration, and they subsequently gifted works of art to his family. French's sister-in-law, the artist Alice Helm French, was inspired by the expansive views of the surrounding Berkshire hills and intimate views of the garden; she gave the family her oil painting *Monument Mountain* and a colorful pastel of the studio garden, which French considered a "great delight."¹⁶ A watercolor by Edward Lind Morse is equally attractive and documents the garden before French and Henry Bacon designed a decorative fountain as a centerpiece. Impressionist Robert Vonnob painted a sparkling garden scene, as well as portraits of French in his studio and of Margaret in French's study, bathed in light. Swedish-born John C. Johansen, who with his artist wife, Jean MacLane, spent summers at Weybourne Hill in Stockbridge, painted double "conversation piece" portraits of French



AUGUSTUS SAINT-GAUDENS (1848–1907), *Sarah Redwood Lee*, 1881, plaster, 26 x 11 1/4 in., Chesterwood, Gift of the Daniel Chester French Foundation, NT 69.38.1170; photo: Paul Rocheleau

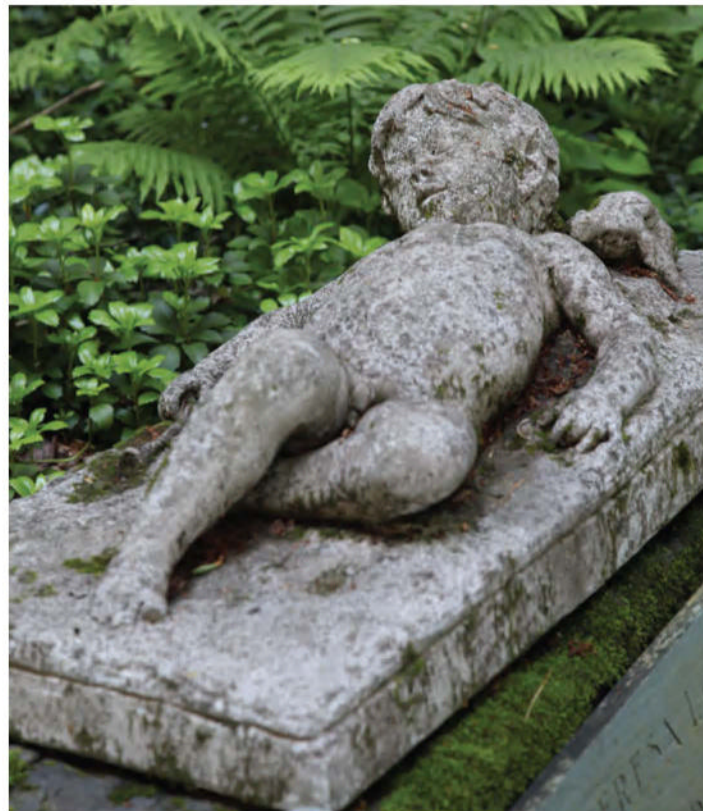


BESSIE POTTER VONNOH (1872–1955), *Girl Dancing*, 1897, cast c. 1906, bronze, 14 1/2 x 12 x 8 1/4 in., Chesterwood, Bequest of Margaret French Cresson, NT 73.45.1686; photo: Gregory Cherin

and his wife in the Chesterwood residence's parlor, and also Margaret and her husband, William Penn Cresson, at the Dormouse, their small cottage down the road. Milton Bancroft's 1904 pastel portrait of French's student and protégée, sculptor Evelyn Beatrice Longman, who was considered part of the family, was likely much treasured. A replica usually hangs in the residence while the original is now in the Chesterwood Works on Paper Collection at Williams College's Chapin Library.

Additional gifts from artist friends include sculpted portraits of Margaret by Longman, as well as *Poetry* and *Prosperity*, two drawings by muralist Edwin H. Blashfield, whom French thanked in a note saying, "I am positively embarrassed by the magnificence of your present to me."¹⁷ Around 1899, sculptor Herbert Adams gave French a polychromed terracotta, *La Jeunesse*; French later recommended that the Metropolitan Museum acquire a magnificent marble and applewood version, declaring that this head had "received the applause of the best artists in New York."¹⁸ An even more significant friendship is explored in the exhibition *Monuments and Myths: The America of Sculptors Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Daniel Chester French*, now traveling across the U.S. French is known to have worked on tinting the plaster Parthenon frieze at Saint-Gaudens's studio in Cornish, but little else by him is found in the collection there. At some point Saint-Gaudens gave French a plaster portrait of *Sarah Redwood Lee*, which Saint-Gaudens considered one of his most successful bas-reliefs. French treasured it, and most likely attempted to emulate his friend's masterful technique in his own bas-relief work.

Along with *Sarah Redwood Lee* and *La Jeunesse* (now in the studio's reception room), important American sculptures at Chesterwood



EDWARD CLARK POTTER (1857–1923), *Sleeping Faun Visited by an Inquisitive Rabbit*, 1888, marble cement, 13 1/2 x 39 x 16 1/2 in., Chesterwood, Gift of the Daniel Chester French Foundation, NT 69.38.3534; photo: Paul Rocheleau

include Longman's bronze *Torso*, Bessie Potter Vonnoh's bronze *Girl Dancing*, and Edward Clark Potter's charming *Sleeping Faun Visited by an Inquisitive Rabbit*. French considered Potter's marble version "one of the very finest pieces of ... sculpture in the country,"¹⁹ and he installed a marble cement version in "the Circle," an outdoor room along the woodland walks at Chesterwood. It is not surprising that the Metropolitan acquired versions of these same works during French's three-decade tenure as its *de facto* sculpture curator.²⁰

Important works in marble at Chesterwood include the neoclassical *Eve*, a gift from sculptor Thomas Ball, in whose Florence studio French had worked in the 1870s. In his 1875 essay "The Studio of Thomas Ball," French marveled at seeing the original full-size statue of *Eve Just Created*; today Ball's bust of *Eve* is displayed in Chesterwood's parlor. A Renaissance-style *Bust of an Italian Woman* carved in the studio of Larkin Mead, another American working in Florence, sits on the dining room mantel. According to a handwritten label on its reverse, Mary Adams French purchased it for \$70 with "the first money earned in literature in 1900." Perhaps she had recently sold one of her short stories, though her best-known publication, *Memories of a Sculptor's Wife*, was not published until 1928.²¹ Although not as active as her husband in collecting art, this purchase indicates she had refined taste and an eye for quality.

Margaret and Penn Cresson were also art aficionados. Wed in Sicily, they began their life together by acquiring watercolors of Taormina street scenes. A talented portraitist, Margaret French Cresson continued sculpting after her marriage, and in 1925 made a sculpted portrait of the landscapist Henry Parton, a family friend and frequent participant in Stockbridge's annual art exhibitions. She gave Parton this bronze and in return received *Tom Ball Mountain*, an autumn view of Monument Mountain from the west porch of the Chesterwood residence. Parton later gave her two more paintings; one of these, *Berkshire Storm*, has traditionally hung in the residence's stairwell.²² Like her father, Margaret



GARI MELCHERS (1860–1932), *A Wayside Madonna*, 1925, etching on paper, 8 x 6 1/4 in., Chesterwood Works on Paper Collection, Chapin Library, Williams College, (Bequest of Margaret French Cresson, NT 73.45.5308)

French Cresson was a member of art committees and societies, and her social circle included artists, photographers, and writers. Often in thanks for her hospitality at Chesterwood, she received numerous gifts from artists such as Donald De Lue, Jerry Farnsworth, and Isabella Banks Markell. Berkshire neighbor Frank Crowninshield sent a 1921 Rockwell Kent woodcut and inscribed Gari Melchers's poignant etching *A Wayside Madonna* "To Peg and Penn."

Penn Cresson was from a wealthy Pennsylvania/Delaware family related to the Quaker settler William Penn. The Chesterwood collection includes works he inherited, such as a reproduction of Thomas Sully's portrait of his ancestor Elliott Cresson (1796–1854), which Margaret displayed at Chesterwood. Penn's uncle George Vaux Cresson left him a notable landscape by Scottish-born Hudson River School landscapist William Hart, and many other objects at Chesterwood also have a Cresson provenance. Penn Cresson also amassed a large collection of art and ephemera during his travels and consular appointments abroad, including Persian "miniatures" from Tehran and watercolors by the Armenian artist Sarkis Katchadourian. The Chesterwood Works on Paper Collection includes many of Cresson's own accomplished drawings and watercolors. Trained as an architect at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, he made a detailed drawing for a house in Sheridan Square, Washington, D.C., now the Irish Embassy. In 1923 he purchased a Saint-Gaudens bronze statuette of *Diana* at a sale at the Stockbridge estate of Daniel Rhodes Hanna. The Cressons displayed their prized

Diana in their Washington townhouse; when Margaret moved to Chesterwood, she installed it on the breakfast porch, later in the residence main hallway, and finally in the dining room. More recently, it was on long-term loan in the Metropolitan's Luce Study Center, but now is back on view at Chesterwood.

As Chesterwood continues to evolve, additional works by artists in French's circle will be placed on view throughout the site. It is hoped that along with an appreciation for French's creative process and achievements, visitors will gain an understanding of how an artist and his family decorated their surroundings to foster a creative environment, support living artists, and reaffirm their place in society. The Frenches' collection was deeply personal and rewards close looking; the works tell stories of aspiration, connection, discovery, experience, family, and friendship. ●

Information: chesterwood.org. Details about the national tour of Monuments & Myths are available on the website of its organizer, the American Federation of Arts: amfedarts.org.

Dana Pilson is a curatorial researcher and collections coordinator at Chesterwood, and a frequent contributor to *Fine Art Connoisseur*.

Notes

- 1 For Chase's studio and collecting practices, see Isabel L. Taube, "William Merritt Chase's Cosmopolitan Eclecticism," *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* (online), Autumn 2016.
- 2 Daniel Chester French (DCF) to Henry Flagg French, 11 June 1876. Daniel Chester French Papers, Library of Congress (hereafter DCFP/LOC).
- 3 DCF to Ellen Ball, wife of Thomas Ball, 18 May 1879; DCFP/LOC.
- 4 DCF to William Merchant Richardson French, 16 Aug 1874; DCFP/LOC.
- 5 DCF to sister Harriette Van Mater French Hollis, 26 Aug 1877; DCFP/LOC. French's portrait of Porter was cast in bronze before 1914 at the John Williams Foundry; it is now in the collection of New York University's Hall of American Artists, Elmer Holmes Bobst Library.
- 6 DCF to Henry Flagg French, 15 July 1876; DCFP/LOC.
- 7 DCF to William Merchant Richardson French, 2 Aug 1889; DCFP/LOC.
- 8 DCF to Henry Flagg French, 15 April 1885; DCFP/LOC.
- 9 DCF to William Merchant Richardson French, 10 Nov 1886; DCFP/LOC.
- 10 DCF to William Merchant Richardson French, 13 Aug 1910; DCFP/LOC.
- 11 DCF to Henry Flagg French, 10 August 1875; DCFP/LOC.
- 12 Margaret French Cresson (MFC) to Mrs. Henry Howell, Jr., Frick Art Reference Library, 24 April 1967. Curatorial files, Chesterwood.
- 13 MFC suggests the work was purchased at a 31 May 1907 auction in New York. She recalls that her father purchased it before her 1909 debut party, for which French fixed up the "old Studio" in New York; she remembers seeing it in the studio then. Oral History, 28 Sept 1972, curatorial files, Chesterwood.
- 14 Cataloguing information at Chesterwood indicates French purchased *Lady Frances Hamilton* for \$300 at a 26 March 1909, auction. According to MFC, this was the most expensive painting he ever purchased. (Mary Anne Christy to Michael Richman, 28 June 1964. Curatorial files, Chesterwood.) French purchased *The Duchess of Portsmouth* at the Fifth Avenue Auction Rooms, New York, 31 March 1903, for \$82.50.
- 15 DCF to Albin Polasek, 28 Oct 1924; DCFP/LOC.
- 16 DCF to William Merchant Richardson French, 30 Dec 1900; DCFP/LOC.
- 17 DCF to Edwin H. Blashfield, 3 Feb 1906; DCFP/LOC.
- 18 DCF to Robert W. de Forest, 1 Feb 1907; DCFP/LOC.
- 19 DCF to Oliver D. Russell, 1 April 1892; DCFP/LOC.
- 20 Thayer Tolles, "One of the greatest interests of his life," Daniel Chester French and the Metropolitan Museum of Art," *Fine Art Connoisseur* (May/June 2016), 48–53.
- 21 Curiously, French's 24 June 1900 letter to Newton Mackintosh states that while in Florence he ordered "thirty flower pots for the garden ... and a renaissance marble bust!" It is possible he is referring to the *Bust of an Italian Woman*, as it resembles an Italian Renaissance marble bust more than almost any other object in the collection.
- 22 MFC's bronze bust of Parton is in a private collection.

AN ARTFUL SEASON

A GIFTED GENERATION

SAN ANTONIO

briscoemuseum.org
June 14–September 8

The Briscoe Western Art Museum is set to open a major loan exhibition titled *Survival of the Fittest: Envisioning Wildlife and Wilderness with the Big Four*.

On view will be more than 50 works created by a quartet of masters who rewrote the book — so to speak — on the painting of wildlife worldwide. They were the German-American artist Carl Rungius (1869–1959), the Germans Richard Friese (1854–1918) and Wilhelm Kuhnert (1865–1926), and Sweden's Bruno Liljefors (1860–1939). Part of a remarkable generation, they are especially admired for their unprecedented ability to show creatures in their natural habitat, integrating them into the greater whole rather than isolating them like anatomical specimens. These works have been borrowed from the only two museums anywhere that own masterpieces by every member of this elite: the Rijksmuseum Twenthe in Enschede, Netherlands, and the National Museum of Wildlife Art in Jackson, Wyoming.



CARL RUNGIUS (1869–1959), *Morning Mist (Harlow Triptych)*, c. 1930, oil on canvas, 47 x 79 1/2 in., JKM Collection, National Museum of Wildlife Art, Jackson, Wyoming

Located along the San Antonio River Walk, the Briscoe's main building was constructed in the 1930s as a public library. After an extensive renovation, the museum opened in 2013. The institution is named in honor of the late Texas Governor Dolph Briscoe, Jr., and his wife,

Janey Slaughter Briscoe, who envisioned a museum that would share the story of Western heritage and the extraordinary people behind it. The institution has recently produced the first publication surveying its growing permanent collection.

WOMEN'S ART IN THE SOONER STATE

BARTLESVILLE, OKLAHOMA

waow.org and woolaroc.org
May 4–August 4

Women Artists of the West (WAOW) is a non-profit organization in its 54th year of promoting women painters and sculptors. Much anticipated every year, its Invitational Exhibition and Sale will soon become the first project focused on women artists ever to grace the Woolaroc Museum. Located in the Osage Hills of north-east Oklahoma, this museum is admired for its Native and Western art and artifacts, as well as a 3,700-acre wildlife preserve.

On view will be paintings and sculpture created by 37 artists across the U.S., Australia, and Canada; the catalogue can be studied online now. The opening day of May 4 will feature a lively conversation among Shiloh Thurman (the Woolaroc's director), Emily Burns (director of the University of Oklahoma's Charles M. Russell Center for the Study of Art of the American West), and Lisa Staudohar (*Art of the West* magazine). This will flow into the festive opening reception and the fixed-price draw (which can be accessed via proxy for those unable to attend in person). After the 4th, anyone can purchase the remaining artworks directly from the museum staff.

KATHY HARDER (b. 1951), *Flying through the Air*, 2024, watercolor on paper, 38 x 30 in.



CELEBRATING TAOS

TAOS, NEW MEXICO

LaLuzdeTaos.org and couse-sharp.org
June 14–15

In 1915, six American-born, European-trained artists founded the Taos Society of Artists (TSA) to promote American and Native art of the Southwest. Their group grew to include 12 active members and several more associate and honorary members. Among the founders were E.I. Couse and J.H. Sharp, whose names endure through the Couse-Sharp Historic Site in downtown Taos, now owned and managed by the Couse Foundation. Here visitors have long enjoyed exploring Couse's home and studio, the garden designed by his wife, Virginia, the workshops of his son, Kibbey, and Sharp's two studios.

The site is also home to the Lunder Research Center (LRC), a 5,000-square-foot facility that contains an exhibition space, collections storage, research library, and curatorial and office space. Gathered in one place for scholars' convenient access are sketchbooks, documents, and photographic materials related to TSA members, as well as to the Native American art and ethnographic items they collected.

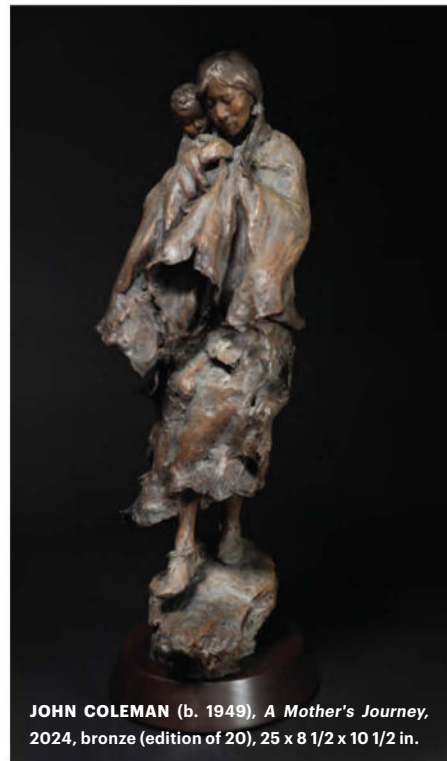
After its successful launch in 2022, the second edition of the exhibition *La Luz de Taos* is already on view, featuring recent work by more than 40 artists in various media. Executive director and curator Davison Packard Koenig notes that TSA members'

"shared vision of creating a uniquely American art permanently influenced not only the world of art but also prevailing perceptions of Native America and the American West." He says, "The artists in *La Luz de Taos* represent a breadth of backgrounds, presenting a contemporary vision of our region, its people, and the nuanced history and traditions imbued in the landscape."

Chaired by Peter and Paula Lunder, the collectors and philanthropists who made the LRC possible, the site's celebratory weekend will kick off on June 14 with an open house and exhibition closing reception. The next day, scholar Marie Watkins will speak about TSA member Julius Rolshoven, and that night the gala and art sale will occur at the nearby El Monte Sagrado Resort. There a draw will determine which lucky people get chances to purchase the artworks; most are offered at fixed price, but a few will be sold via secret-bid auction. Absentee ballot slips allow anyone to participate from afar, and all proceeds will support the site's mission of "bringing the legacy of Taos art to life."

Participating artist Logan Maxwell Hagege notes, "Taos has an intense magnetic draw to artists and people who are in tune to its special beauty and character. I am so grateful that the Couse-Sharp Historic Site exists to help preserve the legacy of the TSA as well as educate the public on this fascinating time in Western American art history. On a very personal level, I'd love to dig into the archives and get to know these artists more intimately."

Another participating artist, Nathanael Volckening, recalls, "Growing up in Taos, I was deeply influenced by the surrounding



JOHN COLEMAN (b. 1949), *A Mother's Journey*, 2024, bronze (edition of 20), 25 x 8 1/2 x 10 1/2 in.

landscapes, cultures, and luminaries of the Taos Art Colony. There is something truly enchanting about the light — *la luz* — of Northern New Mexico. Just as that light has inspired the work of generations of artists before me, it continues to ignite my own passion for painting. Participating in this exhibition is a homecoming to the artistic roots that continue to shape my own journey."

QUITE A PAIR

SANTA FE

matteucci.com
June 22–July 12

Nedra Matteucci Galleries will soon mount the exhibition *A Lifetime of Learning: Two Artistic Journeys*, which presents recent works by the sculptor Ed Smida and the painter Chris Morel.

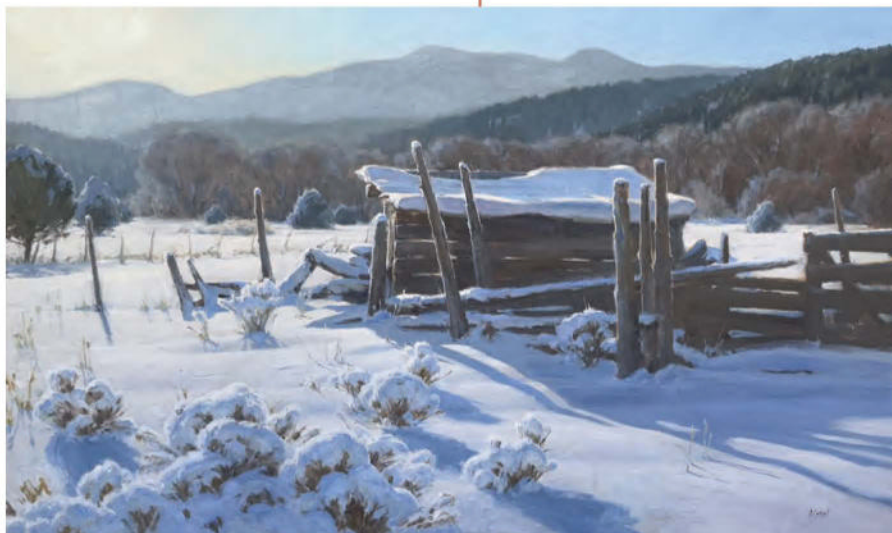
Ed Smida was enjoying a successful career in engineering when he first touched clay in 2012 at the age of 51. He



CHRIS MOREL (b. 1958), *Winter Corral*, 2024, oil on canvas, 36 x 60 in. ■ ED SMIDA (b. 1961), *The Seeker*, 2022, bronze (edition of 9), 35 x 11 x 8 in.

took to it instantly, and now he is now a leading member of the National Sculpture Society.

Chris Morel started drawing as a child and earned a fine art degree from Towson University before thriving as a graphic designer, art director, and illustrator. It was a move to Taos that launched his full-time pursuit of painting, especially the plein air scenes of the Southwest that have won him acclaim.



BEST OF THE WEST

OKLAHOMA CITY

[nationalcowboymuseum.org/
prixdewest](http://nationalcowboymuseum.org/prixdewest)

May 31–August 4

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum is set to launch its 52nd annual *Prix de West* Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale, one of the field's highest-quality events. Opening on May 31 will be a display of nearly 300 paintings and sculptures created by more than 85 invited talents. Their works depict landscapes, wildlife, figures, portraits, and moments in Western history and lore. *Prix de West* is the museum's largest annual fundraiser, with last year's revenues totaling more than \$4 million.

The action really gets underway on the weekend of June 7–8, when collectors in person and online will enjoy a range of seminars, workshops, receptions, dinners, awards presentation, fixed-price sale, and of course the



BRENT COTTON (b. 1972), *November Morning*, 2024, oil on board, 26 x 40 in.

live auction. Among the presenters that weekend will be John Coleman, Scott Gale, Daniel J. Keys, T. Allen Lawson, Huihan Liu, Walter T. Matia, and Sonya Terpening.

To make reservations, see the full schedule, or arrange to bid by proxy, please visit the museum's website.

LEARN BY DOING

COLORADO SPRINGS

broadmoorgalleries.com

June 23–28

Located at the scenic Broadmoor resort, the Broadmoor Galleries Art Academy is poised to welcome the master sculptor John Coleman for a six-day workshop he has created for artists who already understand the basic principles of composition and design. He will begin each day with a demonstration highlighting key concepts, then assign participants a daily project that allows them to explore their artistic vision and “breathe life into clay.”

Providing draped models and all necessary materials, Coleman will address the mechanics of applying clay to an armature, and will be joined by fellow sculptor Erik Petersen, who will share insights on the patination of bronze and such casting phases as molding, welding, and chasing. Their overall goal, Coleman says, is to stimulate a sense of “sculptural poetry that resonates with each participant.”



JOHN COLEMAN (right) watches **ERIK PETERSEN** at work.



GREAT ART WORLDWIDE

LOOKING BACK

FINDING HIDDEN TREASURES

Long Island Museum
Stony Brook, New York
longislandmuseum.org
through June 2

The Long Island Museum is the first institution to organize a retrospective devoted to the artist Samuel Adoquei (b. 1964), which it has titled *Finding Hidden Treasures*. Born in Ghana, Adoquei came to New York in 1987 to continue his education; there he matured into a master and has since become the first and only African



SAM ADOQUEI (b. 1964), *Rodney*, 1995, oil on canvas,
24 x 26 in., collection of the artist

artist to teach at all of the city's major art institutions and academies.

On view are almost 30 works, ranging from portraiture and still life to scenes of nature. Among the highlights are his 10-foot-wide triptych *The Legacy and Burial of Martin Luther King*, as well as landscapes painted not far from the museum in East Hampton and Shelter Island. Screening in the gallery are excerpts from a 2012 film about Adoquei written and directed by Gabriel de Urioste.

After walking through the exhibition this spring, Adoquei noted, "It was interesting to see some of my earliest paintings next to some recent canvases. Same with my technique: some paintings were approached with the most careful classical method, while others have a spirit of fun and spontaneous innovation."

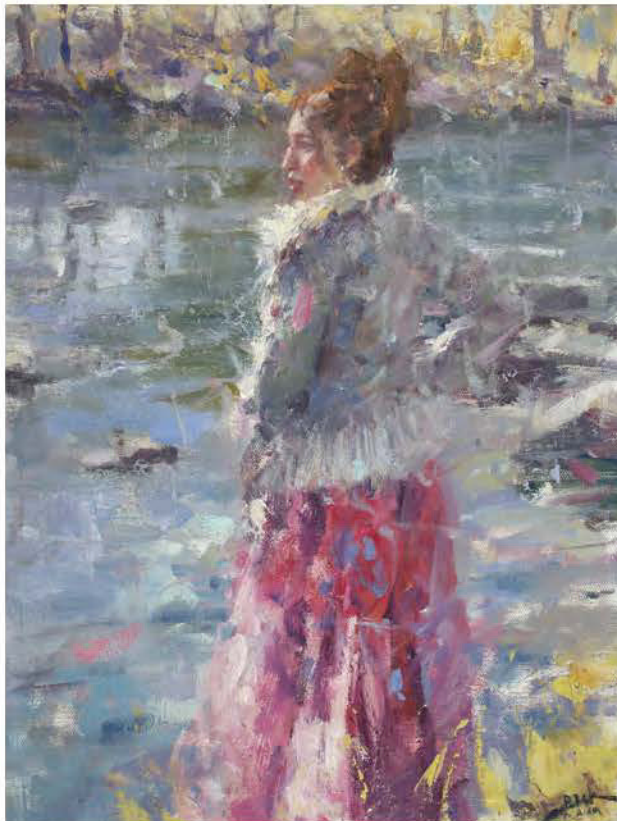
SMALL BUT GOOD

AIS IMPRESSIONS SMALL WORKS SHOWCASE

Anderson Fine Art Gallery
St. Simons Island, Georgia
americanimpressionistsociety.org
andersonfineartgallery.com
through May 28

Anderson Fine Art Gallery is hosting the American Impressionist Society's 8th Annual AIS Impressions Small Works Showcase. On view are 150 pieces selected by a five-member jury that reviewed approximately 1,500 submissions, plus an additional 20 paintings created by AIS masters, board members, officers, and founders. Based in Wilmington, North Carolina, awards judge Dan Beck faced a challenge choosing among the works in oil, watercolor, pastel, gouache, and acrylic.

AIS is a nonprofit art organization with more than 2,300 members across the U.S. It was founded in 1998 to promote the appreciation of living American impressionist artists through exhibitions, workshops, and educational programs.



DAN BECK (b. 1955), *Down by the River*, 2024, oil on canvas, 16 x 12 in.,
available through the exhibition

BREAKING NEW GROUND

FORWARD TOGETHER

Honolulu Museum of Art
Hawaii
honolulumuseum.org
through September 15

In 2022 the Honolulu Museum of Art (HoMA) acquired 55 pieces from the Jean and Robert Steele Collection — all works on paper created by 26 African American artists. This acquisition (part gift and part purchase) has radically transformed HoMA's representation of artists of color, and this year it is celebrating with the exhibition *Forward Together: African American Prints from the Jean and Robert Steele Collection*.

Because works on paper are light-sensitive, they are being shown in two rotations; the first half closes on May 12, and the second half appears soon thereafter (May 16–September 15). All were made between 1976 and 2014 by such talents as Emma Amos, Romare Bearden, Sam Gilliam, Barkley L. Hendricks, Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence, Jacob Lawrence, and Faith Ringgold. Working in a variety of techniques and ranging from figuration to abstraction, their pieces explore the retelling of significant stories, cultural memory, social justice, war, and other themes through the lens of the African diaspora. The show's title comes from a 1997 work by Jacob Lawrence, who honored Harriet Tubman's efforts to shepherd enslaved people from captivity in the South.

Robert Steele purchased his first artwork in Harlem in 1968 when he was a graduate



RON ADAMS (1934–2020), *Blackburn*, 2000, lithograph on paper, 29 1/2 x 39 in. (framed), Honolulu Museum of Art: partial gift of Robert and Jean Steele; partial purchase with funds from the John V. Levas Trust, 2023 (2023-06-01)

student at Yale. The distinguished printmaker Robert Blackburn, depicted here in a Ron Adams lithograph that Steele acquired later, encouraged the younger man to connect with other printmakers like Lou Stovall and Allan Edmunds. Ultimately Steele became director of the David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the Visual Arts and Culture of African Ameri-

cans and the African Diaspora at the University of Maryland. His wife, Jean, is a former corporate executive, and the two relocated to Honolulu in 2016. They have also gifted art to other institutions, including the Mobile Museum of Art, Morehouse College (Atlanta), College of William & Mary (Virginia), and Yale University.

HOW NATURE MAKES US FEEL

SCENE: UNSEEN

Monroe Arts Center
Monroe, Wisconsin
monroeartscenter.com
through June 8

Scene: Unseen is an exhibition of paintings created by Douglas Whittle, on view at the Monroe Arts Center, an hour southwest of his home in Madison, Wisconsin. Most of the works on view are landscapes.

The artist notes, “A beautiful landscape elevates my soul somehow, and I’ve always thought that it would be great if I could somehow make that feeling last, and keep it with me. It may sound pretentious, but when I begin a painting, I really am trying to replicate the powerful feelings that were created in me by the landscape. The way that a place looks is not the same thing as the sentiments



it evokes in me when I’m there. That’s really what I consider the greater challenge: conveying those feelings. It is the sensory experience that I receive from the landscape that inspires me to try and create a physical memory of it.”

Whittle is a sixth-generation Floridian who earned a B.F.A. in painting and an M.F.A. in printmaking from the University of Florida. After teaching for 12 years at a college in

DOUGLAS WHITTLE (b. 1957), *Monument Valley*, 2019, oil on wood, 36 x 80 in., available through the Monroe Arts Center

South Carolina, he spent 17 years devising and leading educational trips for the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He retired in 2021 and now is painting full-time.



NOAH SATERSTROM (b. 1974), *What Became of Dr. Smith* (detail), 2023, oil on canvas, 122 x 6 feet (overall), collection of the artist

SEARCHING FOR AN ANCESTOR

WHAT BECAME OF DR. SMITH

Mississippi Museum of Art
Jackson, Mississippi
msmuseumart.org
through September 22

Raised in Mississippi and now based in Nashville, the artist Noah Saterstrom earned a B.F.A. from the University of Mississippi and then an M.F.A. from Scotland's Glasgow School of Art. In 2017, he began a long search in state, local, and private archives for information about his great-grandfather, the traveling optometrist D.L. Smith. Eventually he learned that Dr. Smith spent his last four decades at the Mississippi State Insane Hospital in Jackson ("The Old Asylum") and later in nearby Whitfield. This ancestor had been all but erased from the family's history, so Saterstrom created a monumental painting — composed of 183 canvases spanning 122 feet — that tries to tell the man's story.

This vast work is the centerpiece of the Mississippi Museum of Art's exhibition *What Became of Dr. Smith*, which also presents artifacts from Smith's life, including letters, newspaper clippings, and photographs. The show highlights the Asylum Hill Project, which is finding ways to memorialize the approximately 7,000 individuals whose remains were discovered on that site more than a decade ago.

The accompanying catalogue, edited by curator Megan Hines, includes an interview with Saterstrom conducted by the novelist Ann Patchett, whose 2019 book *The Dutch House* has a Saterstrom painting on its cover, and also an essay by British painter Timothy Hyman situating *What Became of Dr. Smith* within the history of narrative painting.

Saterstrom has already sold more than 1,500 paintings related to Dr. Smith through the charitable Instagram platform Artist Support Pledge.

AMERICAN ART'S JOURNEY

TASTEMAKERS, COLLECTORS, AND PATRONS

Frick Collection with Penn State
University Press
shop.frick.org

The Frick Collection and Penn State University Press recently published the book *Tastemakers, Collectors, and Patrons: Collecting American Art in the Long Nineteenth Century*. Edited by Linda S. Ferber, Margaret R. Laster, and Samantha Deutch, it contains 10 essays that explore American art collecting in the U.S. from the late 18th through early 20th centuries, ranging from the Eastern Seaboard to the Old South, Midwest, and West Coast. The contributors include Lynne D. Ambrosini, Sarah Cash, Julie McGinnis Flanagan, Ilene



Susan Fort, Barbara Dayer Gallati, Lance Humphries, Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser,

Sophie Lynford, Kimberly Orcutt, and Richard Saunders.

Their themes consider individual collectors and collectives, civic philanthropy in the fine arts (including the forming of public museums), the creation of an American school distinct from, yet rooted in, European tradition, and the impact of sectionalism (especially pointed during and after the Civil War).

This is the sixth and final book in the Frick's *Studies in the History of Art Collecting in America* series. Its previous titles include *Holland's Golden Age in America: Collecting the Art of Rembrandt, Vermeer, and Hals* (2014); *A Market for Merchant Princes: Collecting Italian Renaissance Paintings in America* (2015); *Buying Baroque: Italian Seventeenth-Century Paintings Come to America* (2017); *The Americas Revealed: Collecting Colonial and Modern Latin American Art in the United States* (2018); and *America and the Art of Flanders: Collecting Paintings by Rubens, Van Dyck, and Their Circles* (2020).

CELEBRATING NATURE

THE HARTLEY INVITATIONAL

Salmagundi Club
New York City
salmagundi.org
through May 31

The Salmagundi Club is presenting its third annual *Hartley Invitational: Celebrating Art in the Naturalist Tradition*, which is named for one of the organization's founders, the sculptor Jonathan Scott Hartley (1845–1912). On view this season are figure, landscape, and still life paintings and sculptures created by 62 wide-ranging artists who draw inspiration from nature.

The show has been curated by Milène J. Fernández, Alexander Katlan, Jacob Collins, and Judith Pond Kudlow, and the juror for the \$12,000 grand prize is the art historian Gregory Hedberg. Fernández says she knows an artwork is worthy “when you can’t take your eyes away from it. You are left feeling uplifted and awestruck. You are relieved and delighted because this feeling is what you expect to gain from art.”



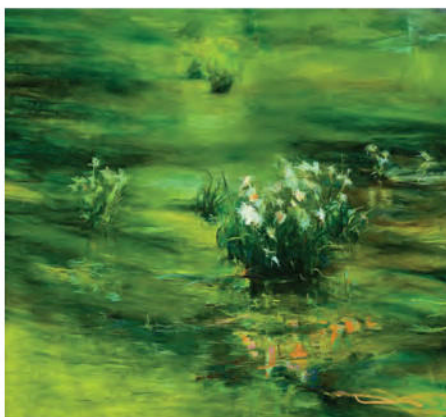
JOSHUA LAROCK (b. 1982), *Bather*, 2024, oil on linen, 24 x 26 in.

VISIONS OF NATURE

MARCIA HOLMES: VERDANT SPACES

Degas Gallery
New Orleans
thedegasgallery.com
May 4 – July 4

Verdant Spaces is the title of Marcia Holmes's seventh solo exhibition at Degas Gallery, and perhaps the most meaningful because it marks both her 70th birthday and 25th anniversary of making art.



MARCIA HOLMES (b. 1954), *Cahaba Lily Reflections*, 2024, oil on canvas, 59 x 63 1/2 in.

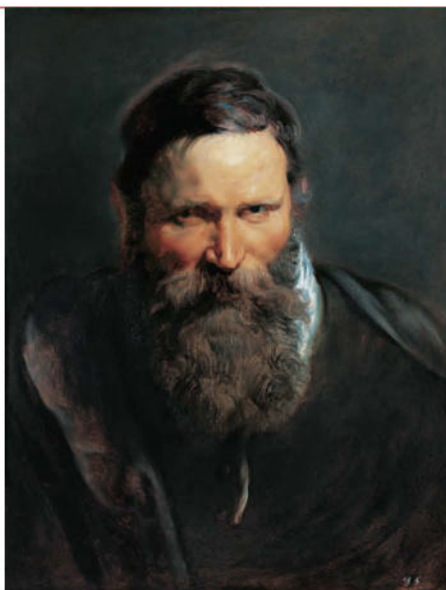
Based in Mandeville, Louisiana—just across Lake Pontchartrain from New Orleans—Holmes says she feels deeply connected to life around water. In her impressionistic scenes made in oils and pastels, she evokes lush gardens, native foliage, and bodies of water with gestural brushstrokes and organic forms that help viewers feel connected, too.

BEYOND PORTRAITURE

TURNING HEADS: RUBENS, REMBRANDT, AND VERMEER

National Gallery of Ireland
Dublin
nationalgallery.ie
through May 26

The National Gallery of Ireland is presenting the exhibition *Turning Heads: Rubens, Rembrandt, and Vermeer*, which features more than 70 works by Dutch and Flemish artists who worked in the 16th and 17th centuries. This project launched at the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp last year, but the Irish curators Lizzie Marx and



PETER PAUL RUBENS (1577–1640), *Head of a Bearded Man*, c. 1616–17, oil on panel, 20 x 16 1/4 in., Princely Collections Liechtenstein, Vienna

Brendan Rooney have added several more works.

Their topic is not the portrait but the *tronie*—a Dutch word for “face” that encouraged artists to experiment with facial expressions and showcase their skills. Among the masterworks on view are Vermeer’s *Girl with the Red Hat*, which rarely leaves Washington, D.C., Rembrandt’s *Laughing Man* (Mauritshuis, The Hague), and the exquisite work by Peter Paul Rubens depicted here.

HONORING THEIR OWN

GRAND OPENING

Palmer Museum of Art
University Park, Pennsylvania
palmermuseum.psu.edu
June 1

To mark the opening of its new 73,000-square-foot location in the arboretum at Pennsylvania State University, the Palmer Museum of Art is presenting *Made in PA*, an exhibition featuring artists who have lived or worked in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Focused on post-1945 painting, sculpture, mixed media, and installations, the project contains more than 30 works, many from the permanent collection. Among the artists represented are Andrew Wyeth, Keith Haring, Philip Pearlstein, and G. Daniel Massad. A separate exhibition titled *Made in PA on Paper* is also on view.

Not surprisingly, the Palmer's collection encompasses numerous works by artists from the Keystone State. From the 18th century come Benjamin West and members of the Peale family, and there are the pioneering 19th-century Black artists Henry Ossawa Tanner and Grafton Tyler Brown, individuals affiliated with the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (e.g., Daniel Garber and Violet Oakley), Ashcan School leaders like John Sloan



and George Luks, and members of the early 20th-century New Hope impressionist colony.

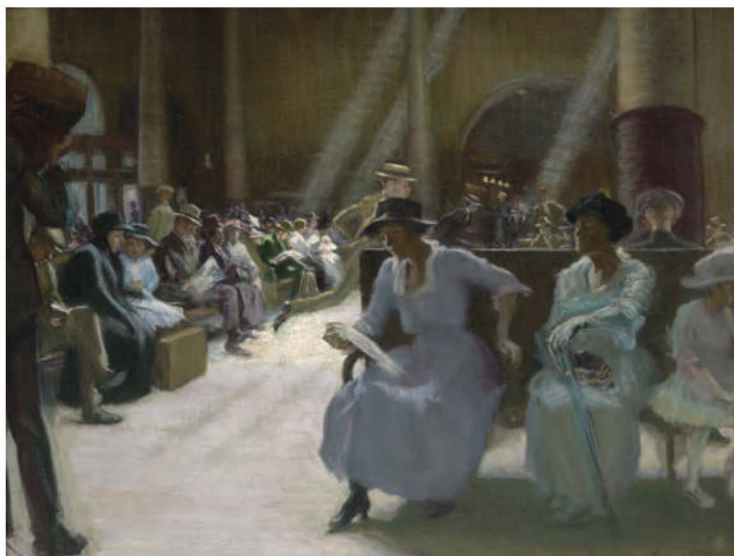
The Palmer's new teaching gallery is opening with *The Art of Teaching: Medical Education and the Integrated Curriculum*, an exhibition co-curated with faculty in Penn State's College of Medicine. This project extends the two units' partnership, which already offers an integrated arts and science curriculum for medical students.

GRAFTON TYLER BROWN (1841–1918), *Hot Springs at Yellowstone*, 1889, oil on canvas, 16 1/8 x 24 1/8 in., Palmer Museum of Art, purchased with funds from the Terra Art Enrichment Fund, 2020.97

ART ON THE RAILS

ALL ABOARD

Shelburne Museum
Shelburne, Vermont
shelburnemuseum.org
June 21–October 13



The title says it all. *All Aboard: The Railroad in American Art, 1840–1955* is the touring exhibition premiering this summer at Vermont's Shelburne Museum, an institution that has long celebrated various modes of transportation. On view are more than 50 works by major artists who witnessed the railroad's expansion and impact for themselves.

Starting with trains' emergence as a technological marvel, the project traces the anxiety felt by such Hudson River School masters as Thomas Cole and George Inness about the railroad's profound impact on nature. Yet colleagues such as Albert Bierstadt were enthralled by the Western landscapes that trains made it easier to reach, while early 20th-century talents such as Edward Hopper, Reginald Marsh, George Bellows, John Sloan, and Jacob Lawrence relished the constant movement of freight and people. Ben Shahn, Thomas Hart Benton, and others portrayed railroad workers as modern-day heroes, while contemporaries like Georgia O'Keeffe, John Marin, and Joseph Stella stripped the machine forms down to highlight their power. It's not all roses: the show also explores how railroads damaged Native cultures and contributed to wealth inequality nationwide.

All Aboard has been organized by Shelburne in partnership with the Dixon Gallery and Gardens (Memphis) and Joslyn Art Museum (Omaha), where it will appear later.

EDMUND C. TARBELL (1862–1938), *In the Station Waiting Room, Boston*, c. 1915, oil on canvas, 24 3/8 x 32 in., Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, gift of Dr. Joseph R. Fazzano. 1956.7

LOOKING AGAIN

UNNAMED FIGURES

Historic Deerfield
Deerfield, Massachusetts
historic-deerfield.org
May 1–August 4

Located in New York City, the American Folk Art Museum has won praise for its exhibition, *Unnamed Figures: Black Presence and Absence in the Early American North*, which closed there this March. Now Historic Deerfield, the second and only other venue for this groundbreaking show, is expecting crowds throughout the run there.

Despite their importance, the experiences and contributions of Black people have generally been invisible in our country's historical artworks. Slavery and racism were not uniquely Southern problems, as can be seen in this exhibition's 97 works, which include paintings, needlework, ceramics, and photographs. Selected by co-curators Emelie Gevalt, RL Watson, and Sadé Ayorinde, they encourage visitors to consider who appears in these images — and who has been omitted.

Curatorial department director Amanda Lange says that *Unnamed Figures* “will significantly expand the conversation around Historic Deerfield’s collection and regional history... [It] may also change the way visitors view our museum’s permanent collections for years to



JOSEPH RUSSELL SHOEMAKER (1795–1860), *Dining Room of Abm Russell, New Bedford, 1848–54*, watercolor on paper, 18 x 15 x 3/4 in. (framed), New Bedford Whaling Museum, Massachusetts, gift of Mrs. Edward K. Sampson, 1962.4.13

come. Several objects from Historic Deerfield were added to the exhibition for this venue, including a cornice plane made by Black craftsman Cesar Chelcor of Wrentham, Massachusetts, a 1793 copy of Phillis Wheatley’s *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, and a recent acquisition of an 1818 ‘Bobolition’ broadside with a Greenfield, Massachusetts, imprint, among others.”

Historic Deerfield is a museum of early American life situated in an authentic 18th-century New England village in the Connecticut River Valley. In 2022, it partnered with the Witness Stones Project to install 19 memorials at properties along Old Main Street, sharing names and information about the lives of Deerfield’s enslaved residents.

EXCELLENCE IN WATERCOLORS

INTERNATIONAL WATERCOLOUR MASTERS EXHIBITION

Llilleshall Hall
near Newport, Shropshire, England
iwm2024.com
May 15–24

The English artist and author David Poxon rejoices in the fact that Britain brought watercolors to global attention as a fine art during the 18th century. To celebrate this heritage, he has organized the third edition of the International Watercolour Masters Exhibition at an idyllic spot in western England, roughly 35 miles northwest of Birmingham.

On view will be 150 works by more than 50 of the world’s best watercolorists, including Julia Barminova, Carol Carter, Veneta Docheva, Pasqualino Fracasso, Laurie Goldstein-Warren, Xi Guo, Alex Hillkurtz, Coco Nguyen, Gerhard Ritter, Deepti Singh, Claire Sparkes, and Sarah Stokes. Complementing the display will be a lively program of demonstrations and workshops.



DAVID POXON (b. 1960), *Escapade*, 2023, pure watercolor on paper, 27 x 16 in., available through IWME 2024 or the artist

ARTISTS & INSPIRATION IN THE WILD

Yellowstone and Yosemite may be more famous, yet the largest publicly protected park in America's lower 48 states is Adirondack Park in northeastern New York, owned not by the U.S. government but by New York State. In the middle of it, *Adirondack Experience: The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake* is the latest iteration of a private, nonprofit museum that arose from the 1948 formation of the Adirondack Historical Association, and the establishment of The Adirondack Museum 11 years later, on the former site of a hotel built in 1876.

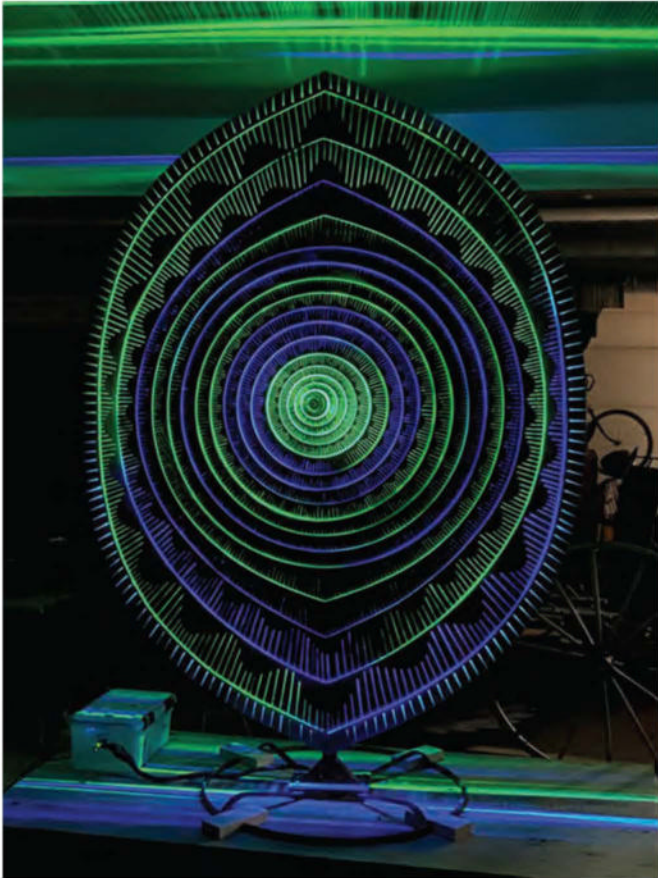
According to the website of ADKX, as the museum is known today, its original mission was "ecological in nature, showing the history of man's relation to the Adirondacks. The first objects collected were from the Blue Mountain Lake area. The exhibits featured the Marion River Carry Railroad engine and passenger car, the steamboat Osprey, a stagecoach, several horse-drawn vehicles, a birch bark canoe, and dioramas depicting various aspects of life in the Adirondacks."

Following a renovation, the museum repurposed its original exhibitions hall as a home for its art collection, dubbing it *Artists & Inspiration in the Wild* and welcoming the public back inside last May. This past January, I braved the cold to visit ADKX curator Laura Rice and speak with her about the genesis of this permanent installation. Having been greeted by the registrar and other staff members, I accompanied Laura into the exhibition, where she started by explaining that the 32-acre campus has multiple buildings, each with a different focus. Several of these displays had needed to become more interconnective, in order to offer visitors a less siloed experience. As Laura put it:

We mapped out a series of exhibitions that would tie them together for visitors, starting with *Life in the Adirondacks* ... here's what the Adirondack Park is, and so forth. The next thing on the list was making use of this incredible art collection. We wanted to have a place that would be permanently dedicated



(TOP RIGHT) ADKX's main entrance ■ (RIGHT) The Light Gallery; photos courtesy ADKX



TYLER SCHRADER (b. 1996), *Cosmic Portal*, 2022, ash, poplar, maple, and LED lights, 9 x 6 feet, 2023.015.0001

to the art. We faced some challenges with that. Most visitors think of us as a museum of history, not of art. I remember standing in the lobby of this building before it was reconfigured. I watched a woman push a baby stroller inside, look at an installation with paintings and say, “Oh, it’s just art,” and wheel right back out. I thought, “Well, there’s a problem! How do we engage people who might not be interested, who might be a little intimidated by the idea of art?”

ADKX visitors often consist of intergenerational groups that include small children, parents, and grandparents. The challenge for Laura and her colleagues, then, was to create something that all age groups would find engaging, without alienating the traditional art lover who prefers a quieter, more contemplative experience.

Laura continued, “So we started taking a deep dive into the collection, thinking about works we did not have, and would like to have, and the kinds of artists not represented, especially 19th-century women. We have a large and vibrant Mohawk and Abenaki community that is traditionally from the Adirondacks, including artists doing amazing things. They were under-represented, too.” Logically, the museum has been making acquisitions to fill these gaps.

Laura and her colleagues met with designers to develop spaces where, by immersing themselves in the art collection, visitors would be inspired to approach the museum’s other exhibits in fresh and exciting ways. By capturing

SANFORD R. GIFFORD (1823–1880), *A Twilight in the Adirondacks*, 1864, oil on canvas, 24 x 36 in., 1963.124.0002



CHARLES CROMWELL INGHAM (1796–1863), *The Great Adirondack Pass*, Painted on the Spot, 1837, oil on canvas, 48 x 40 in., 1966.114.0001, gift of Harold McIntyre Grout

a sense of place, the artworks help define how people think of the Adirondacks — as “Forever Wild.” Interpretive wall panels and labels make sparing use of the term *wilderness* because the museum wants to acknowledge the fact that the Adirondack region has long been inhabited by the Mohawk and Abenaki, who were displaced by newcomers seeking to profit from extractive industries and seasonal tourism. The artworks now on view were selected to tell those stories from different perspectives.

As we toured the exhibition, Laura described how this vision was put into action:

The challenge was reaching all ages. How do you appeal to children without turning off older art aficionados? So, we used a number of different strategies. One was to put the interactives in the center of each gallery, which gives kids something to do while the adults look at art. We had worried about maintaining that quiet, contemplative experience with a lot of kids running around. For the most part, people are respectful, and the kids are occupied. We’ve seen conversations occurring between kids and their elders about the art, and there’s nothing more natural than children and art.

Artists & Inspiration in the Wild is divided into four sections: *Light*, *Water*, *Forests*, and *Mountains*. Within each gallery, artworks ranging from oil paintings to baskets, ceramics, woodwork, metalwork, and textiles address a common theme. Initially this presented the designers with daunting challenges because the conditions under which a watercolor may be safely displayed are quite different from those for a canoe paddle. Exhibiting such a variety in the same gallery would require a subtle manipulation of light levels.

Laura said ADKX hopes “to bring in all sorts of different works from different periods.” She continued, “Coming next year is *Cosmic Portal*, which is nine feet tall and six feet wide. It was created by an up-and-coming woodworker in the Adirondacks named Tyler Schrader, who makes incredible layers of wood with LED lights that can respond to electrical impulses in the ground, moving the lights accordingly. It offers an opportunity to expand the collection in ways we haven’t addressed before.”

Laura called my attention to a sculpture by Margaret Jacobs (b. 1986), “an up-and-coming artist in the Mohawk Nation. She does a lot of work, as many do, with ideas about cultural identity and sovereignty. This piece is called *Carrying Knowledge: Mint*. It’s her take on a pack-basket with mint leaves. It’s about that connection with the natural world, herbal medicine, and knowledge of what nature does to benefit humankind, how that’s being carried forward into the future.”

We made our way to *Twilight in the Adirondacks*, a painting by Sanford R. Gifford (1823–1880). Laura explained that this yellow-orange



PAUL MATTHEWS (1933–2019), *Cascade Sunset (The Dark Hills)*, 2001, oil on linen, 50 x 60 in., 2001.053.0001



DAVID KANIETAKERON FADDEN (b. 1970), *He Peers through the Trees*, 2016, acrylic on canvas, 20 x 24 in., 2022.014.0002

sunset scene is one of four canvases Gifford painted in the same location, each capturing a different light effect. This one was made on a hunting trip he took during the Civil War, which had already claimed his brother's life. As a member of the New York State Militia's Seventh Regiment, Gifford himself had faced mobs during the 1863 New York City Draft Riots. "When you look at the light in this painting," Laura noted, "you get a sense of the sorrow and rage the artist felt."

We came to another large canvas, a vertical composition of gigantic boulders at the foot of a rocky escarpment, Charles Cromwell Ingham's *The Great Adirondack Pass*. Laura observed, "The first time people saw this, what impressed them wasn't Ingham's skill as a landscape painter, but his accurate portrayal of the landscape, in scale with human beings. Painters, poets, and writers were inspired to come and stand on that spot. It was around that time that American artists were searching for something that would define them as American — as opposed to European. That connection to the landscape started to take on nationalistic overtones. The landscape symbolized who we were as a nation: pioneer settlers going out to conquer, and thus improve the land. That idea of *wilderness* really lingers in the American imagination."

The awesome power of nature is also captured in the painting *Cascade Sunset* by Paul Matthews (1933–2019), and in a brooding depiction of Ausable Chasm (which some call the Grand Canyon of the Adirondacks) by Samuel Colman (1832–1920). The jumbled forms and slashing brushstrokes of John Marin's watercolor *Adirondacks, Near Owl's Head* (1947) convey a sense of latent violence, while in Harold Weston's *Giant* (1922), dumping clouds swarm a bulging summit above broad snowy pastures. A more pastoral view is captured by Rockwell Kent in a 1961 painting of

his Asgaard Farm, while Ellen Phelan's 2008 print *Autumn Border* celebrates wildness in the artist's garden. Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait's *A Good Time Coming* (1862) is a picture that could almost serve as an upbeat pendant to Gifford's elegiac *Twilight*. Laura explained that Tait's title is based on a line from Sir Walter Scott's novel *Rob Roy*, a reference to paradise after death. "It was painted in 1862 as the Civil War was becoming very bloody. So Tait was presenting the Adirondacks as a place to find peace and camaraderie in the midst of this awful event."

Nearby is a globe-shaped basket (1998) by a Mohawk artist named Florence Benedict; according to Laura, it "also speaks to peace and fellowship and camaraderie, but in a very different way, and these works are hundreds of years apart." Pairing disparate objects like these can be traced back to the African American artist Fred Wilson's groundbreaking 1992 exhibition, *Mining the Museum*, at the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore. Today a growing number of curators and artists are decolonizing museum narratives. On view at ADKX, for example, is *He Peers Through the Trees*, painted by Akwesasne Mohawk David Kanietakeron Fadden, who runs the Six Nations Iroquois Cultural Center 70 miles away in Onchiota, New York. His smiling portraits of indigenous people torpedo racist stereotypes such as the glum-faced cigar-store Indian.

In 1978, Don Wynn (b. 1942) became the first contemporary artist granted a solo exhibition at the Adirondack Museum, due in part to the international acclaim he had garnered as a participant in the New Realism movement. On view at ADKX now is his portrait of *Cedric Gates*, or *A Hunter in the Snow (Orion)*, which offers a contemporary take on Tait's *Still Hunting on the First Snow*.



JOHN MARIN (1870–1953), *Adirondacks, Near Owl's Head*, 1947, watercolor over graphite on paper, 15 1/4 x 20 1/4 in., 2011.050.0001



DON WYNN (b. 1942), *Cedric Gates or A Hunter in the Snow (Orion)*, 1975, oil on canvas, 90 1/2 x 78 in., 2003.025.0001, gift of Jack Beal and Sondra Freckelton

Not all of the paintings here are representational, however: a 1972 color-field painting by Ludwig Sander resonates with Edith Mitchell's *After the Microburst* (1996–99), a vibrant quilt that echoes the feminist aesthetic of Canadian-American artist Miriam Schapiro.

During my visit, I was drawn to several notebooks on display, including a hunting-trip sketchbook from 1870 by Cassius Marcellus Coolidge, an illustrator best known for his humorous paintings of poker-playing canines. Another sketchbook had been produced by self-taught artist Seth Moulton, who fashioned paintbrushes from his grandchildren's hair. A series of small, gorgeous watercolors by an

artist known only as L.L.S. captures the unspoiled beauty of the Adirondacks in the 1870s.

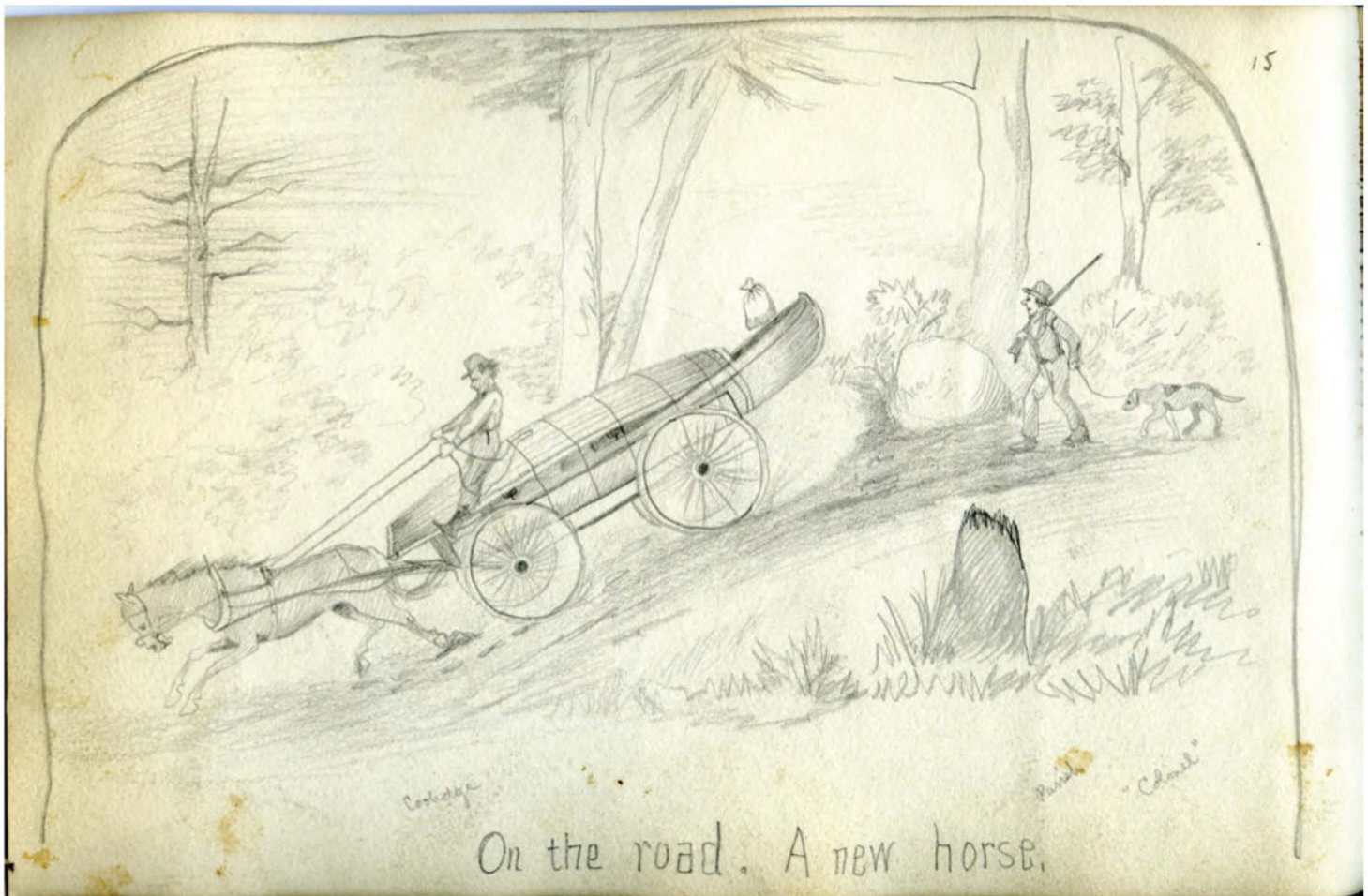
These are just a few highlights in this engrossing and comprehensive installation. At the far end of the building, visitors come upon the Art Lab / Robillard Family Makerspace, a kid-friendly, hands-on learning environment designed in collaboration with Adirondack artist Barney Bellinger. There visitors can discover that, in Bellinger's words, "everyone is an artist, builder, crafter, or maker." ●



Information: ADKX (theadkx.org) is located 90 minutes by car from Lake Placid, two hours from Albany, and three hours from Montreal. This year it is open daily between May 14 and October 24.

JAMES LANCEL MCELHINNEY is a visual artist, essayist, and author of the *Sketchbook Traveler* books, as well as many writings that explore intersections between art, landscape, history, and the environment. He resides in the Champlain Valley and Manhattan with his spouse, the noted art historian Katherine Manthorne, and a cat named Maeve. *American Nocturnes*, a selection of McElhinney's recent landscapes, will open on June 14 at Gerald Peters Gallery in Santa Fe (gpgallery.com).

(LEFT) **ARTHUR FITZWILLIAM TAIT** (1819–1905), *Still Hunting on the First Snow: A Second Shot*, 1855, oil on canvas, 54 x 76 in., 1965.036.0001 ■
(BELOW) **CASSIUS MARCELLUS COOLIDGE** (1844–1934), Untitled page from an Adirondack Hunting Trip Sketchbook, c. 1870, pencil on paper, 2019.072.0001





OFF THE
WALLS

ARTISTS & GALLERIES



Clyde Aspevig (b. 1951), *Hollyhocks*, 2024, oil on linen, 60 x 48 in.

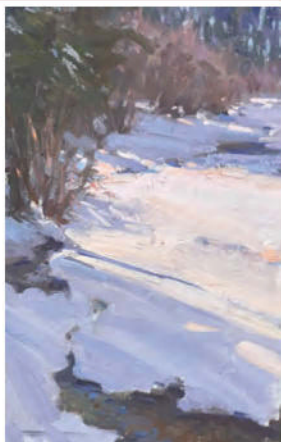
Loveland, Colorado

governorsartshow.org

May 11–June 9

To be held at the Loveland Museum, the 33rd annual Colorado Governor's Art Show & Sale will feature more than 60 artists offering four works each, encompassing sculpture, mixed media, and paintings in oils, pastels, watercolors, and acrylics. Twenty of the artists are new to this juried program; returning to it are Legacy Artists Clyde Aspevig, James Biggers, Jane DeDecker, Kim English, Quang Ho, and Daniel Sprick, along with 2023 Best of Show recipient Jen Starling.

Carolyn Lindsey (b. 1960), *From the Bridge*, 2023, oil on linen, 13 x 8 in.



Albuquerque

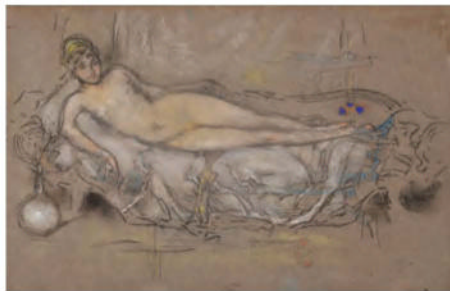
papnm.org
weemsgallery.com

June 1–23

The nonprofit organization Plein Air Painters of New Mexico (PAPNM) is set to launch *Paint New Mexico!*, its first

statewide paint-out for members, to be followed by a juried show of up to 90 of their new paintings at Weems Gallery. Their subjects will encompass New Mexico's scenic deserts, rivers, mountains, architecture, and skies. The jurors are Damien Gonzales, Richard Prather, and Clive Tyler, and the awards judge is Paul Murray.

AUCTIONS & FAIRS



James Whistler (1834–1903), *Nude Model Reclining*, c. 1900, chalk and pastel on brown paper, 6 3/4 x 11 in.

Newbury, England

dreweatts.com

June 12

As part of its Old Master, British, and European Art auction, Dreweatts is offering three drawings by the Anglo-American master James Whistler. Two depict Venice — the city he loved dearly — and the other is illustrated here. It has a particularly interesting provenance that is detailed on the firm's website.

MUSEUMS



Barbara Ernst Prey (b. 1957), *Red Cloak Blue Bucket*, 2019, watercolor and drybrush on paper, 28 x 40 in.

New Britain, Connecticut

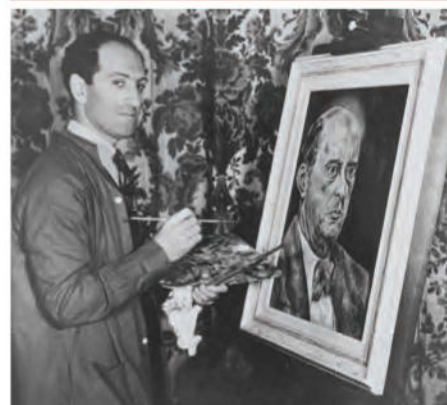
nbmaa.org

through October 6

The New Britain Museum of American Art (NBMAA) is presenting the exhibition *Handled with Care: Shaker Master Crafts and the Art of Barbara Prey*.

It has been 250 years since the United Society of Believers, more commonly called Shakers, arrived in America from England. They made by hand most of what they needed — tools, baskets, tubs, cleaning and measuring devices — and sold many more of those items to the outside world. A leading repository of their creations is Hancock Shaker Village (Pittsfield, Massachusetts), which in 2018 invited the artist Barbara Ernst Prey to create 10 large watercolors of anything on its property that engaged her attention. She has loaned six of the resulting works to NBMAA's show, which also features

items from Pittsfield that all have handles and have survived in good condition. These have been selected by curator M. Stephen Miller.



George Gershwin in his Beverly Hills home with his finished and framed *Portrait of Arnold Schoenberg*, 1937; photo: Gabriel Hackett/Archive Photos/Getty Images

Naples, Florida

artisnaples.org

through June 16

Artis–Naples, The Baker Museum has organized *George Gershwin and Modern Art: A Rhapsody in Blue*, the first major exhibition devoted to the famous American composer's passion for visual arts. Gershwin (1898–1937) remains beloved for his innovative work as a composer, songwriter, and pianist, but he also produced numerous paintings, drawings, and photographs, and his collection of modern art was one of the most significant of his time. This project features 22 works he owned, 17 he made, and 18 by artists inspired by Gershwin's music, ranging in date from 1935 to today. Among the talents represented are Marc Chagall, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Oskar Kokoschka, Miguel Covarrubias, Isamu Noguchi, Andy Warhol, and Kara Walker.

Because 2024 is the centenary of *Rhapsody in Blue*, Artis–Naples has been celebrating Gershwin all season. The exhibition contains that masterwork's original manuscript, loaned by the Library of Congress, and the Naples Philharmonic Jazz Orchestra will offer a program of Gershwin's music on May 15.

Wausau, Wisconsin

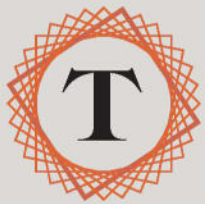
wmoca.org

through July 21

The Wausau Museum of Contemporary Art is presenting recent works by Jennifer Balkan, who grew up near New York City and is based in Austin. On view are figurative paintings with deftly managed coloration and thought bubbles derived from comic books that let us know the subject is actively thinking. Also included is a group of works proposing a world in which dogs are the active thinkers, with humans along in supporting roles.



Jennifer Balkan (b. 1970), *Untitled.Blue3 (Thoughts in Blue, Three)*, 2023, oil, acrylic, and spray paint on panel, 30 x 20 in.



TODAY'S
MASTERS

DIGITAL CONTENT

BY MATTHIAS ANDERSON

ANNOUNCED: THE LATEST PLEINAIR SALON WINNERS

This winter, talented plein air painters around the world participated in the February 2024 edition of the *PleinAir Salon* competition, which was judged by Darrell Beauchamp, executive director of the Western Art Museum in Kerrville, Texas. The program encompassed a bonanza of honors and awards: First Place (\$600 cash prize); Second Place (\$300 cash prize); Third Place (\$200 cash prize); People's Choice Award (\$100 cash prize); and the category winners (\$50 cash prize each).

Dr. Beauchamp notes, "I believe that every art competition results in the growth of the artist. First, it requires the artist to ask serious questions about the overall quality of a work and how it will hold up against other works in its genre. It requires an artist to take a chance, to let the work, and by extension themselves, be thrown out there for judgment. If approached with a positive attitude, competition can allow an artist to grow by looking at the works of others, knowing all the while that art is subjective and beauty is truly in the eye of the beholder."

All winners were automatically entered into the annual competition that will be awarded in May during the 11th Annual Plein Air Convention & Expo in Cherokee, North Carolina. The Grand Prize winner of that competition will receive a check for \$15,000 and will have their winning painting featured on the cover of *PleinAir Magazine*.

Congratulations and thanks to everyone involved, and please visit [PleinAir Salon Art Competition — Not Just for Plein Air Painters!](#) to learn more about upcoming competitions. ●



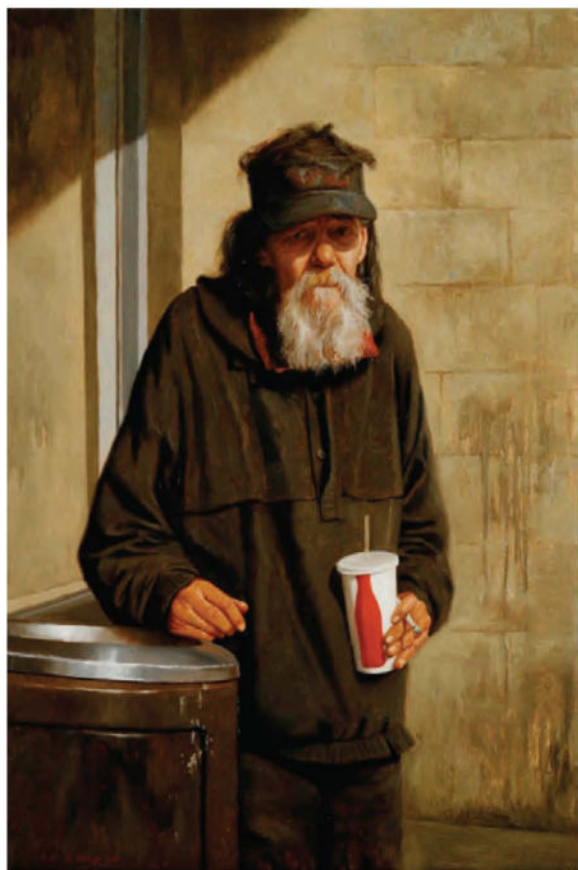
Looking East, Bill Farnsworth, oil, 12 x 16 in., First Place Overall, \$600 cash prize

MATTHIAS ANDERSON is a contributing writer to *Fine Art Connoisseur*.

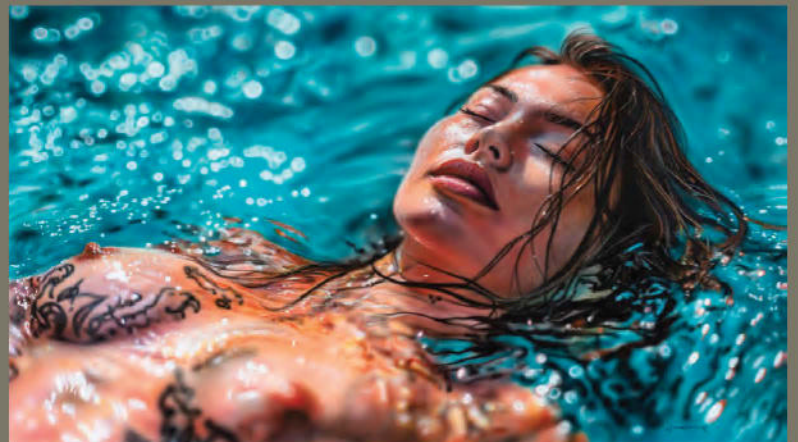


(LEFT) *Fall Tilling*, Warren Chang, oil, 34 x 40 in., Second Place overall, \$300 cash prize ■ (BELOW LEFT) *Port Clyde Co-Op Cove*, Thomas Bucci, watercolor, 14 x 21 in., Third Place overall, \$200 cash prize ■ (BELOW) *A Day in Autumn*, Antoine Khanji (Canada), acrylic, 30 x 40 in., People's Choice Award, \$100 cash prize

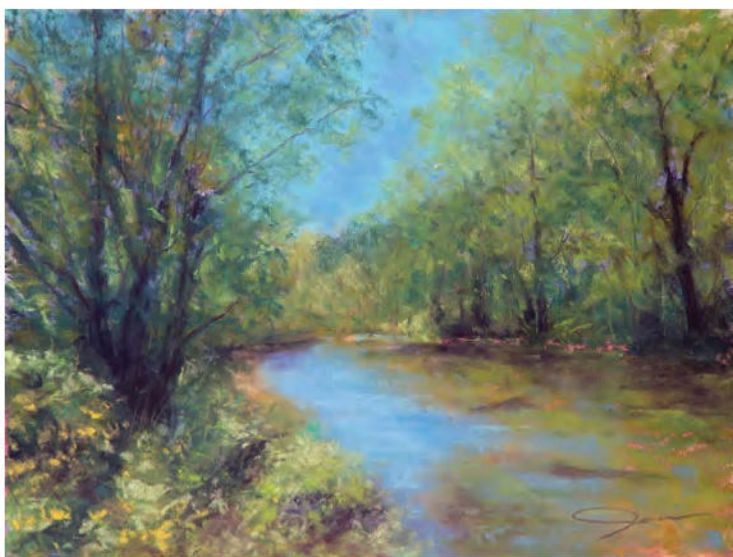
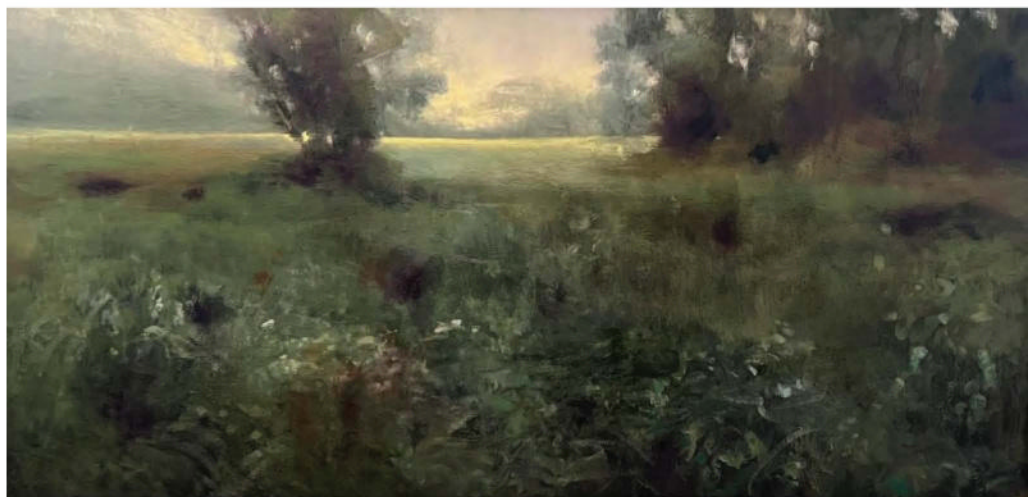




(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) *Hard Times*, Warren Chang, oil, 36 x 24 in., Best Artist Over 65 ■ *Tomorrow's Ascent*, Susan Simmonds, pastel, 12 x 18 in., Best Beginner ■ *Summer Oasis*, Mo Myra, watercolor, 18 x 24 in., Best Animals & Birds ■ *Lo and Behold*, Bill Farnsworth, oil, 20 x 30 in., Best Clouds & Sky ■ *Chrysler Building in Winter*, Mark Daly, oil, 24 x 18 in., Best Building



(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) *A Walk in the Country*, Bill Farnsworth, oil, 30 x 24 in., Best Landscape ■ *Fragrant Diversion*, Camille Przewodek, oil, 16 x 20 in., Best Floral ■ *Ready When You Are*, Elizabeth Lewis Scott, graphite, 10 x 13 in., Best Drawing ■ *Tattooed Beauty*, Johannes Wessmark (Sweden), acrylic, 21 x 38 in., Best Figure & Portrait ■ *Night Ship*, Stock Schlueter, oil, 36 x 40 in., Best Nocturne



(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) *Spring Peeking Through*, Poppy Balser (Canada), watercolor, 16 x 20 in., Best Plein Air Watercolor & Gouache ■ *Rabbit Brush*, Daved English, oil, 12 x 16 in., Best Plein Air Oil ■ *Near West River*, Megan Whitfield, acrylic, 12 x 24 in., Best Plein Air Acrylic ■ *Spring Creek at Fisherman's Paradise*, Jennifer Shuey, pastel, 12 x 16 in., Best Plein Air Pastel ■ *Morning Orison*, Nic Fischer, oil, 16 x 16 in., Best Plein Air Landscape



(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) *Winging It*, Mark Daly, oil, 20 x 16 in., Best Vehicle ■ *Rock Creek Waterfall*, Sheryl Knight, oil, 16 x 20 in., Best Water ■ *Dirt n Dust*, Sharon Standridge, oil, 30 x 20 in., Best Western ■ *Rufous Hummingbirds & Wedding Vase*, Rebecca Korth, oil, 20 x 16 in., Best Still Life

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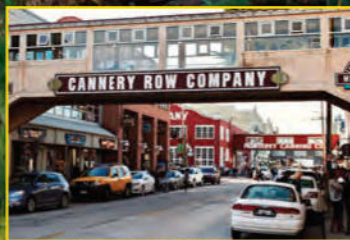
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Evening Breeze, 18x24, oil on linen

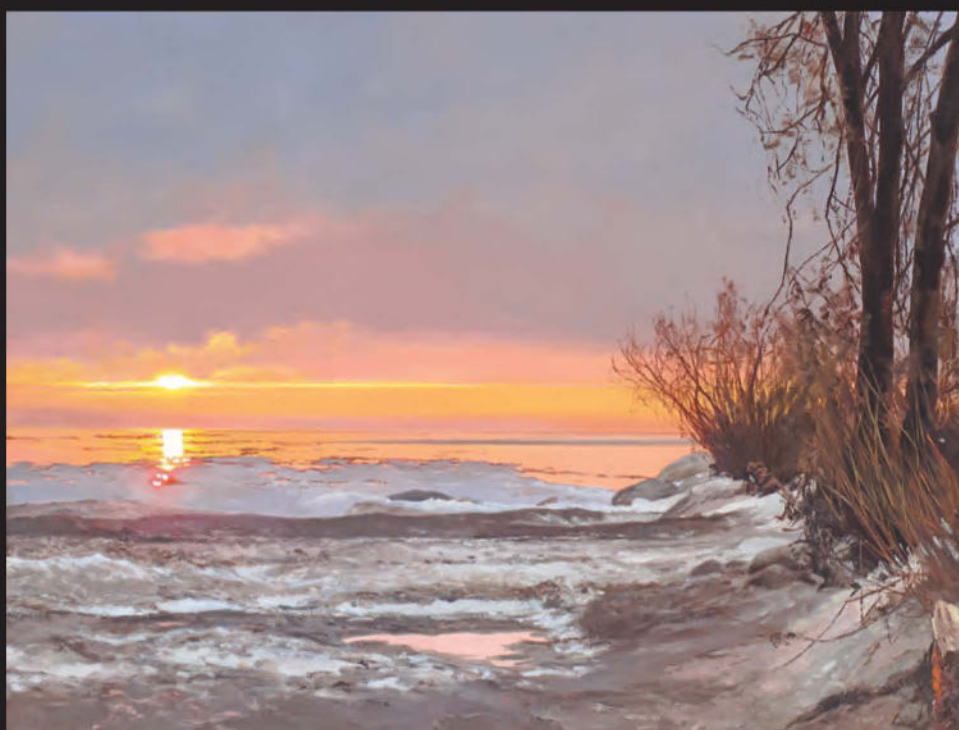


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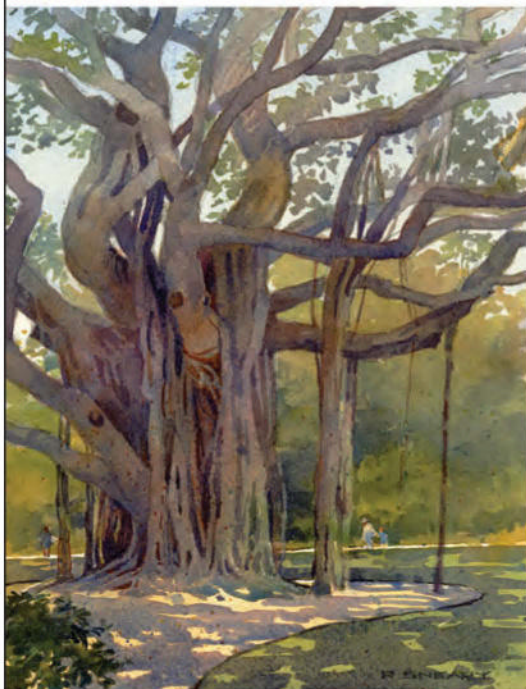


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Bart Walter (United States, b. 1958), *Climate Change II*—detail, 2011, and *Climate Change*, 2010. Bronze with German Silver (Nickel Silver) Patina. Collection of the Artist. © Bart Walter.



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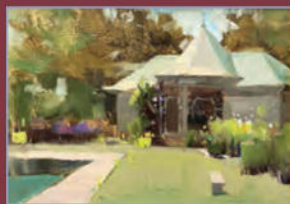
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Elise Phillips, PA
Edmond Praybe, MD
Cynthia Rosen, VT
Kari Ganoung Ruiz, NY
Jennifer Sampson, NY
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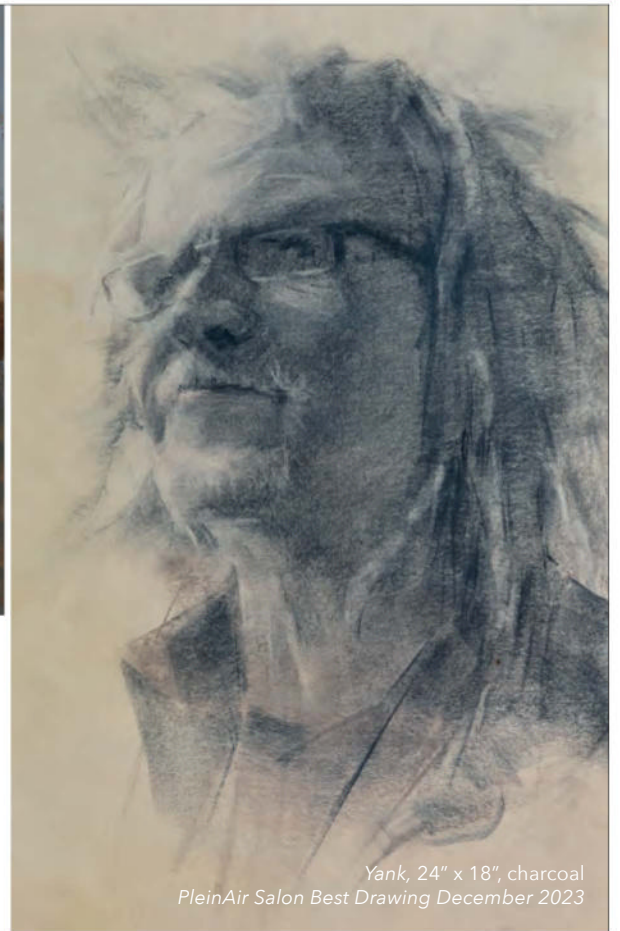
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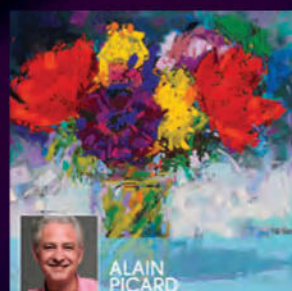
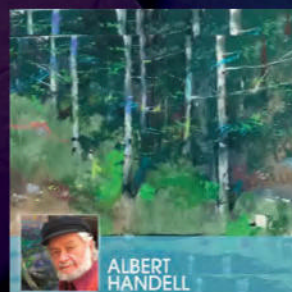
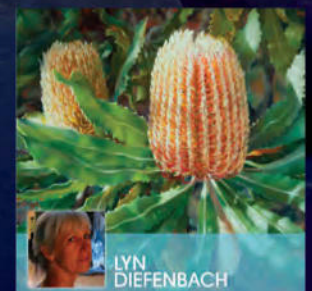
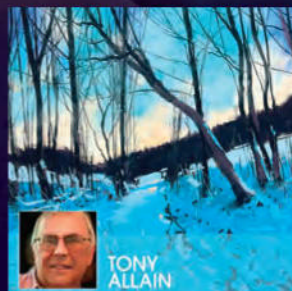
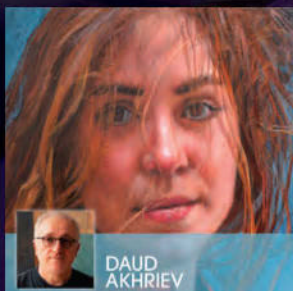
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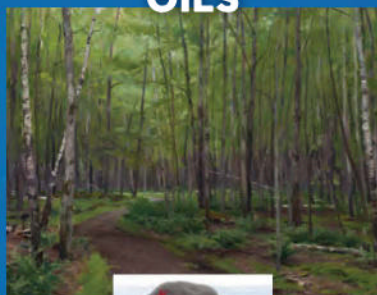
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