

Project: Scent of the Pine, You Know How I Feel
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NOTES:

[TITLE PANEL]

Scent of the Pine, You Know How I Feel

[SUBTITLE]

North Carolina Art from the Jonathan P. Alcott Collection

[INTRO panel; this text replaces text in previous versions]

From the breathtaking views of North Carolina's Smoky Mountains to the magnetic appeal of its Piedmont to the sun- and sand-filled peacefulness of its coast, the Old North State has something special.

All three regions provide backdrops for *Scent of the Pine, You Know How I Feel*, which features 73 works by artists who were born in our state or lived or worked here. The works span two centuries and numerous styles, from realism and American Impressionism to postmodernism and folk art.

The exhibition's title was inspired by lyrics from the song "Feeling Good," as sung by Tryon native Eunice Kathleen Waymon. Today we know her as Nina Simone, and we recall the song's soulful and sultry character to evoke the same sense of place and people as the images in *Scent of the Pine*. Another interesting connection is that Simone studied classical piano under Muriel Mazzanovich, wife of artist Lawrence Mazzanovich, who is represented in this gallery.

Scent of the Pine was originally organized by the Longwood Center for the Visual Arts and curated by K. Johnson Bowles at Longwood University in Farmville, Virginia.

[Word Count, Original: 310]

[Word Count, as revised: 186]

[Alcott bio]

[COPY and IMAGE FOR ALCOTT BIO PANEL]

[DESIGN: this image will need to be pulled from the website:

>> <https://jonathanalcott.com/>]



“Dreams come before success.”

—Jonathan P. Alcott, JonathanAlcott.com

“I have been a collector my whole life,” says Jonathan P. Alcott. But he admits he has gone through many collecting phases. As a young boy in Missouri, he first collected baseball cards and marbles; he eventually expanded his interests to include arrowheads and old keys.

He fondly recalls, one day when he should have been studying at school, he decided to thumb through some old *National Geographic* magazines instead.

In those pages, he saw photographs of paintings by some of the old masters, and as they caught his eye, they awakened him to the wonder of art. The experience has remained with him throughout his life—shaping his future decision to become a savvy devotee of North Carolina art.

Jonathan is a passionate art collector and an award-winning photographer, but, most importantly, he is an entrepreneur and philanthropist. He has spent more than 50 years working his way up through the restaurant business and eventually owned a successful chain of 13 establishments. In addition, he has a degree in biblical studies from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest and is a generous donor to his alma mater. [Jonathan has recently published his memoir, *Wouldn't Have Missed It for the World*, and is currently writing a novella.](#)

He has graciously shared his art collection of North Carolina works with many museums throughout the Southeast. The North Carolina Museum of History would like to thank Jonathan P. Alcott for now sharing this collection of 73 paintings with the people of our state. The works come from his traditional collection in Raleigh and his contemporary collection in Morehead City.

[original word count: 226]

[revised word count: 253]

[intro to Raleigh/traditional section]

Traditional Collection The Raleigh Residence

HOBSON LAFAYETTE PITTMAN

Sunlit Still Life, n.d.

[DESIGN: Michael will pick up these two paintings when he picks up the images that will be used for marketing/publicity; Eric will shoot them all together and get you the image files as soon as possible . . .]

[ALSO, Michael does not care what size these are on the panel (since the originals are in the exhibit)-- whatever fits into your design . . .]



Jonathan's decision to create two aesthetically different art collections was a personal choice based in the view that his Raleigh home, which is more formal and traditional in décor, is better suited for traditional works of art.

His traditional collection—developed after he decided to refocus his collecting plan on North Carolina art—dates from ca. 1861 through 1950. Pittman's work *Sunlit Still Life* was the first piece in that collection.

[original word count: 57]

[revised word count: 71]

[intro to Morehead/contemporary section]

Contemporary Collection The Morehead City Residence

CLAUDE FLYNN HOWELL

Loading Nets, Ocracoke, 1984

[DESIGN: Michael will pick up these two paintings when he picks up the images that will be used for marketing/publicity; Eric will shoot them all together and get you the image files as soon as possible . . .]

[ALSO, Michael does not care what size these are on the panel (since the originals are in the exhibit)-- whatever fits into your design . . .]



Jonathan chose to create a distinctive collection of North Carolina art for his Morehead City home. “The beach house was designed to be a fun and funky getaway from Raleigh,” he says, so he wanted the art to capture this vibe.

The contemporary collection, which dates from 1950 to the present, consists, for the most part, of works by North Carolina college and university faculty members or their students. Claude Howell’s *Loading Nets, Ocracoke* was the first painting purchased for Jonathan’s contemporary collection in Morehead City.

[original word count: 67]

[revised word count: 84]

GEORGE CHARLES AID (1872–1938)

Mère et Son Enfant dans un Parc (Mother and Her Child in a Park), ca. 1905

Oil on canvas



After working for several newspapers as a staff artist and then studying at the St. Louis School of Fine Arts in Missouri, George Charles Aid made his way to Paris in 1899 to the Académie Julian. There, he was trained in the French academic style by artists including Jean-Paul Laurens (1828–1921) and Jean Joseph Benjamin Constant (1845–1902). *Mother and Her Child in a Park* is characteristic of the academic style of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with its emphasis on realism and scenes of everyday life; but the work also nods to Impressionism in its soft focus, color, and light. Though a well-regarded painter, Aid was celebrated for his etchings, too. He earned prizes both in France and in the US, including a silver medal at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis.

France was important not only to his professional career but also to his personal life. In Paris he met and married Mary Orr, a South Carolinian who had ventured abroad to study music. After several years, the couple moved to Bordighera, Italy, to join the artists' colony there. Aid's renown grew, and when he was offered exhibitions in the US, the couple returned to America.

With the outbreak of World War I in Europe preventing their return to Italy, they settled in Tryon, North Carolina, a community known for its natural beauty and its own thriving artists' colony, begun in 1892. There, Aid farmed a vineyard and opened an *atelier* (a workshop where students and assistants learn from a master teacher in a studio setting), where he taught in the French academic tradition, and his and Mary's household became a center of artistic and intellectual life.

[Word Count, Original: 279]

[Word Count, as revised: 282]

LUCY McDONALD “MACKEY” BANE (b. 1928)

The Meadow in My Mind, 1976

Etching



The work of Lucy McDonald Bane (known as “Mackey”) is sometimes reminiscent of the rolling hills and valleys of her birthplace in western Virginia. The meticulously rendered lines harken back to the graphs, charts, and technical drawings she studied as a science major at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech). Bane explains, “There’s a precision in that kind of art that I enjoy.”

Shortly before graduation from Virginia Tech, Bane married, and soon she and her new husband moved to Charlotte, North Carolina. There, she worked in the research division of a cotton company. Her husband’s transfer and their subsequent move to Greensboro left her alone in a new city and searching for more fulfillment. She found inspiration studying art at the Woman’s College of the University of North Carolina (now UNC–Greensboro) with Gregory Ivy,* the great builder of that college’s art department and art gallery. Near the completion of her degree in the late 1950s, Bane divorced.

She once remarked, “I never rebelled against anything. I just went ahead and did things my own way.” And that seems true. After John F. Kennedy was assassinated, Bane quit her job teaching at Meredith College to paint. Life seemed short. She took various teaching positions across the US and traveled in Europe. By the 1970s she was back in North Carolina, where she has been involved in the arts community as a teacher, artist, and curator. Bane is known for her signature paintings depicting smooth shapes and subtle color gradations, as well as for the pickup trucks she drives.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

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[Word Count, as revised: 261]

ROY ELLIOTT BATES (1882–1920)

Cottage in Landscape, n.d.

Oil on panel



After graduating from Harvard College in 1905, Roy Elliott Bates was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford (1905–1908). While in Europe, he also studied painting in Paris, where he likely was influenced by the Impressionists. In 1908, after receiving his degree in English, he was appointed professor of English literature at Acadia College (now Acadia University) in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, where he had once been a student. After one year of teaching, he left the post, citing failing health, and then traveled in Europe for a year, writing poetry and painting landscape scenes in Italy, among other locales. A book of his poetry, *Epithalamium and Other Poems*, dedicated to his brother and sister-in-law upon their wedding, was published in England in 1911.

A favorable review of one of his paintings exhibited in the spring 1909 salon of the Société des Artistes Français must have served as great encouragement, as he soon returned to the US to become an artist. In the winters, he painted in Bermuda, as well as in western North Carolina as a part of the Tryon artists' colony that also included George Charles Aid,* John Sylvan Brown,* Josephine Sibley Couper,* Elliott Daingerfield,* Margaret Moffett Law,* and Lawrence Mazzanovich.* In the summers and autumns, he painted in Connecticut, where his works were included alongside works by notable American artists Childe Hassam and Robert Henri in the 1916 and 1917 Mystic (Connecticut) Art Association exhibitions.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 235]

[Word Count, as revised: 237]

THOMAS HART BENTON (1889–1975)

Goin' Home, 1937

Lithograph



This lithograph was published in 1937 by Associated American Artists. Founded by Reeves Lewenthal in 1934, the organization marketed works to the middle class during the Great Depression as “art for the people.” Lewenthal paid artists \$200 for each edition and made single prints available for \$5, or \$7 for a framed version, at department stores, by mail order, or by subscription.

Benton’s original was an oil painting he created in 1934. Toward the end of his life, to a collector who had recently bought the painting at auction, Benton wrote,

In 1928 I was driving through the back country of North Carolina’s Smoky Mountains with a student friend when we came up to the cart with two kids in the back. As it was impossible to pass them on the narrow road we slowed down and followed. While we were following I made a pencil drawing. Your picture and later a lithograph were made from that drawing.

Benton later elaborated that the friend was Bill Hayden, and the two had driven in a station wagon from New York, to camp and tour the Smoky Mountains, as well as southern farms growing rice, cotton, and sugar.

Benton is known as an American scene painter whose heyday was in the 1930s and 1940s. Considered a regionalist who worked primarily in the Midwest, he was committed to illuminating social issues by depicting everyday people and their environments. He served in the US Navy in World War I, where he used his skills as a draftsman. Benton’s work can be found in major museums throughout the country and abroad.

[Word Count, Original: 270]

[Word Count, as revised: 266]

JOHN BIGGERS (1924–2001)

Untitled (preparatory sketch for an illustration for *I, Momolu*), 1965

Graphite on paper



John Biggers was born in Gastonia, North Carolina. In 1941 he attended Hampton Institute (now Hampton University) with the intention of training to become a plumber. Soon after his arrival, he met an inspirational art educator named Viktor Lowenfeld. When Lowenfeld left to teach at Pennsylvania State University, Biggers followed. There, he earned his BS and MA in art education and later a PhD in education. Biggers started the art department at Texas State University for Negroes (now Texas Southern University) in 1949 and spent his career there.

This drawing was created as an illustration for *I, Momolu*, a 1966 book by Lorenz B. Graham (1902–1989). The book is a coming-of-age story about a 14-year-old boy named Momolu, who travels with his father from his rural Liberian village to the city of Cape Roberts, where he experiences the clash of traditional and Western-influenced African cultures.

While Biggers illustrated *I, Momolu* and other works, including Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth*, Maya Angelou's poem "Our Grandmothers," and his own *Ananse: The Web of Life in Africa* (a narrative of travels in western Africa on a UNESCO fellowship), he is best known as a muralist. In 1984 he was even touted as "America's premier muralist." His subject matter was consistent throughout his life. In his 60s, Biggers reflected,

My only obsession has been and still is to try to portray the meaning of African American life in the South. . . . I'm interested in the spiritual aspirations of black people; how their spirit soars above the mundane and the material and all their problems.

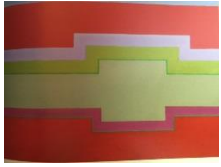
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GEORGE BIRELINE (1923–2002)

Untitled, 1965

Acrylic on canvas



George Bireline came to North Carolina from Illinois in 1950 to study art at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill, after receiving his undergraduate degree at Bradley University in 1949. During the late 1950s, he began teaching at North Carolina State College (now North Carolina State University), and he taught there until retiring in 1986.

A turning point in Bireline’s artistic career came in the early 1960s, when famed New York art critic Clement Greenberg became familiar with his work during a visit to Raleigh and introduced the artist to André Emmerich, a prominent New York gallerist who supported the Abstract Expressionists of the New York School. Bireline rose to national prominence in 1964, when his exhibition at Emmerich’s gallery was reviewed by Greenberg in the New York *Herald Tribune* and sold out. The painting shown here comes from that period of Bireline’s career, when he was often compared to American color-field painters, such as Kenneth Noland (1924–2010) and Ad Reinhardt (1913–1967).

Bireline was later represented by North Carolina gallerist Lee Hansley, who said after Bireline’s death,

When I think about George Bireline, I think about the colors he commanded. Bright, daring hues of fuchsia, electric blue, vibrant red, a dash of acrid green, a splash of cadmium yellow: George never encountered a color he couldn’t use in his painting. Through his development from early abstraction to Abstract Impressionism to color-field paintings, through his triptych phase, his political and allegorical paintings and his collection of self-portraits—his most personal works—the constant unifying thread is the trademark Bireline color.

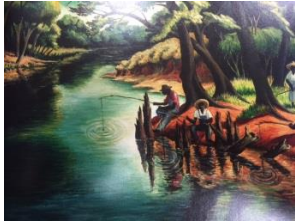
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WILLIAM THOMAS “BILLY” BLACKBURN (1908–1993)

Family Outing, ca. early 1940s

Oil on canvas



William Blackburn, called “Billy” by friends and family, learned to swim in Cripple Creek, one of the many waterways surrounding his native town of Hickory, North Carolina. Influenced by 1930s regionalism, a movement in painting and sculpture that focused on depictions of rural American life by using strong lines and dynamic movement, Blackburn unabashedly re-created the southern landscapes he experienced in childhood and adolescence. The cool, placid blues and greens of water reflecting the deep orange-red of the creek bank seen in *Family Outing* create a sense of the rural North Carolina geography Blackburn recalled from earlier in his life. Even after he moved away from North Carolina to study art in New York, Philadelphia, and Paris and then to work as a window-display designer in Los Angeles, the memories of his youth were always close at hand.

Blackburn produced his work from memory, without models. The subjects of many of his paintings were African Americans who lived and worked in the rural South—but their faces rarely portrayed specific people; instead they were composites of people he knew, as well as performers from theater and film, such as actor Paul Robeson and dancer Josephine Baker. Blackburn was interested in showing the inherent dignity in the lives of his subjects, influenced in part by the political consciousness of regionalist painters. However, popular culture of the 1940s frequently engaged in a dehumanizing caricature of African Americans, and Blackburn, as a consumer of that pop culture, cannot be seen as being entirely separate.

[Word Count, Original: 251]

[Word Count, as revised: 248]

SARAH BLAKESLEE (1912–2005)

The Pink Roof, Chester Spring, Pennsylvania, ca. 1931

Oil on canvas



From 1961 until 1998, Sarah Blakeslee lived in Greenville, North Carolina, with husband and fellow artist Francis Wayland Speight.* Speight was from North Carolina, and he returned over the years to paint with Blakeslee from their home in Pennsylvania. He eventually returned permanently to teach at East Carolina College (now East Carolina University).

Blakeslee had met Speight at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) in the 1930s, when she was a student and he a teacher there. Blakeslee was a talented student who used her numerous prizes and awards to travel across Europe, studying and painting. Throughout her life, she painted landscape images and portraits in a realist manner that was informed by Impressionism and Postimpressionism; the influence of Postimpressionist painter Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) is apparent in the brushwork, structure, and palette of *The Pink Roof*.

When Blakeslee returned home to Washington, DC, after her European travels, Speight, whose sister lived in Washington, called on her; they corresponded and became inseparable. After they married in 1936, Speight and Blakeslee lived for decades outside Philadelphia in the rural community of Castle Valley, where they painted and raised their children while he continued to teach at PAFA.

Blakeslee was determined to paint through her years of child-rearing. David Sellin wrote, “To son Tom and daughter Elizabeth, art was as normal as eating—palette, brushes, lunch, and still life all together on the table, their mother always drawing.” Blakeslee exhibited her work in numerous exhibitions, including some at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the North Carolina Museum of Art.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 263]

[Word Count, as revised: 264]

WARREN BRANDT (1918–2002)

Azaleas and White Pitcher, 1973

Oil on canvas



Warren Brandt's painting recalls some of the great masters: Henri Matisse's bold color and complex pattern, Paul Cézanne's understanding of the structure of form in space, and Édouard Manet's confident, painterly brushstrokes. Brandt's education at Washington University with Max Beckmann also can be felt in the strength of his work. Brandt asserted, "The one thing [Beckmann] taught was organization. The big rhythm that goes through a painting is the main organizing factor."

Brandt found meaning in taking on pictorial challenges, harnessing his skills, and realizing his view of the world. In 1982 Irwin Shaw wrote an essay about Brandt's work that included these words:

It is the work of a man who is happy to be alive, delighted with what his eye observes, with the arrangement his hand makes, the fold of a cloth, the spike of bright color against a dark print on a wall. . . . He is a celebrator.

Brandt's hunger to create and celebrate the world catapulted him from childhood in Greensboro, North Carolina, straight to New York when he hitchhiked to the city at 17 to study art. Throughout his life, he embraced a sense of wanderlust, traveling the country and the world in order to work, paint, and look at art. Early in his career, he taught at Salem College in Winston-Salem, the University of Mississippi, and Southern Illinois University. But painting was his passion, so he stopped teaching in the 1960s to pursue passion full-time. During his lifetime, Brandt's work was shown at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the St. Louis Museum of Art, among many others.

[Word Count, Original: 266]

[Word Count, as revised: 275]

JOHN SYLVAN BROWN (1868–1956)

Farm Near Tryon, 1928

Watercolor on paper



John Sylvan Brown spent many years trying to succeed in business. After his marriage to Rebecca Saxman, whose wealthy family was in the coal business in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, he held successive jobs as a general agent for Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance in Omaha and as president of a small bank in Pittsburgh and worked in the finance department at Ryerson Steel Company in Chicago. None inspired his best efforts, and he was finally fired from Ryerson in 1916.

Brown then took classes at the Art Institute of Chicago, and deciding he would do better working for himself, established the Arrow Tool Manufacturing Company in LaGrange, Illinois. After he invented and patented a blacksmithing tool, his company prospered. Eventually, Brown handed the business over to his son, Hamlin, and John spent more time working on his true passion, painting.

John and Rebecca often spent time at their summer cottage in Castle Pines, Michigan, which is where they met Carter Brown, owner of a local inn and an inn in Tryon, North Carolina. When John and Rebecca visited Tryon in the 1940s, they decided to make it their home. The landscape surrounding their house on Conner Ridge overlooked Pacolet Valley and served as inspiration for many years.

While *Farm Near Tryon* was painted before the Browns moved to Tryon, the influence of Impressionism—common to many of the Tryon artists—is apparent. Though he never considered himself a professional artist, the atmospheric quality of Brown's work is compelling. He spent his last years painting *en plein air* (in open air, outdoors).

[Word Count, Original: 253]

[Word Count, as revised: 257]

(WALTER) HARRISON CADY (1877–1970)

Near Lonesome Gap, North Carolina, 1933

Oil on canvas



Born in Gardner, Massachusetts, Harrison Cady was best known as an illustrator whose satirical cartoons were published in numerous periodicals, including *Life* magazine, *Boys' Life*, *Good Housekeeping*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, and *Ladies' Home Journal*. Particularly beloved were his drawings of animals, and his well-known, iconic characterization of Peter Rabbit still endures for its sweet, yet mischievous, charm. Cady's playful attention to animals comes through in the distinctive gait of a hound dog in the foreground of his painting *Near Lonesome Gap, North Carolina*.

This scene also seems to point out the significance of logging that had taken place in the region during the early 20th century. At the time, more than 6,600 owners—powerful lumber interests and mountain farmers—were all involved in clear-cutting the hillsides. But by the 1940s, this land, more than half a million acres, would be formally dedicated as Great Smoky Mountains National Park. When Cady was visiting the region between the 1920s and the 1950s, the transformation of privately held lands into the park was the focus of both state and federal governments and the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps. Small farms like those depicted in Cady's painting were being bought up, and their families were being displaced, and the land was being restored and reverting to nature.

Cady's work depicting southern life and its landscape was exhibited at the Salmagundi Club's spring exhibition in 1950.

[Word Count, Original: 243]

[Word Count, as revised: 230]

(WALTER) HARRISON CADY (1877–1970)

Tinker's Bell Mill, Great Smoky Mountains, 1932

Etching



After a successful career as an illustrator, Harrison Cady decided to pursue painting full-time. From his home in Rockport, Massachusetts, he traveled to the mountains of North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia to create works depicting the region. During the time, the late 1920s through the 1950s, he was likely inspired by the growing ease of travel the automobile provided, development of the Blue Ridge Parkway (begun in 1935 as a New Deal project), and the popular cause to name the Great Smoky Mountains a national park.

As with the painting *Near Lonesome Gap, North Carolina*,* Cady captures mountain life during the period—this time illustrating the process of cornmeal production, from a hand plow preparing the ground for planting corn to a millrace channeling water to the waterwheel, the wheel turning to generate power to grind the corn into meal, to the mules and wagon waiting to haul meal from the mill.

Cady was interested in how life was changing and becoming more modern and perhaps sought to preserve scenes of simpler times. He seems also to have been attracted to local color and vanishing place-names; note the bell above the peak of the roof that must have given this mill its name. Unlike the stark documentary images created by stellar photojournalists working for the Farm Security Administration in the same area during the 1930s and 1940s, Cady's depictions are narrative, picturesque, and even gently humorous—anodyne rather than angry.

*This work is also represented in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 257]

[Word Count, as revised: 241]

GILBERT FREDERICK “BERT” CARPENTER (1920–2003)

Dahlias, Carnations, and Rose, 1982

Oil on canvas



Growing up in Billings, Montana, Bert Carpenter had little access to art, but he found an early mentor in watercolorist Leroy Greene, who was trained in the realist tradition. In 1938 Carpenter became an art major at Stanford University. While a junior, he studied in Los Angeles, where he met painter Tom Craig and embarked on a cross-country trip painting and visiting museums. Carpenter once reflected on this experience: “It left me in a position to face the major problem for everybody at that time in painting, the conflict between modernism and traditionalism.”

He faced the problem head-on with his flower paintings. Carpenter noted the influence of Jean Charlot, a muralist in the fresco tradition, whom he met while they were both teaching at the University of Hawaii in the late 1940s. As with fresco painting, Carpenter developed his composition in discrete sections rather than working on the entire scene simultaneously. Like Charlot, he also used a frontal light source to emphasize line and color. In 1970 his rose series debuted at New York’s Zabriskie Gallery. *New York Times* critic Hilton Kramer lauded the contemporary effect of scale and color as being “magical . . . without sacrificing anything of the ‘realism’ of his depiction.”

Carpenter impacted the arts in North Carolina significantly during his 26 years as a professor of art at the University of North Carolina–Greensboro (UNC-G). Not only did he teach a generation of artists, but he also served as a gallery director and molded UNC-G’s Weatherspoon Art Gallery into a nationally known museum and venue for contemporary art.

[Word Count, Original: 259]

[Word Count, as revised: 261]

CONSTANCE COCHRANE (1888–1962)

In Clouds on Grandfather Mountain, ca. 1917

Oil on canvas



Constance Cochrane likely painted this scene while studying with Elliott Daingerfield,* her teacher at the Philadelphia School of Design for Women (PSDW, now Moore College of Art), at his summer studio in Blowing Rock, North Carolina. Her penchant for wind-twisted scraggy pines; rugged, rocky landscapes; and the dramatic forces of nature developed further during her later years, while painting seascapes in Maine—particularly on Monhegan Island, where she had a summer studio. Those dramatic seascapes of enormous waves crashing against the jagged coast are amongst her most beloved works.

Cochrane is also noteworthy for her work organizing and encouraging women artists. She and several of her fellow graduates at PSDW were known as the Philadelphia Ten, a group that exhibited together every year from 1917 to 1945. Organized during a time when women artists had little encouragement or support to pursue their own careers as artists, “the Ten” is probably one of the most important groups to forge a path of independence and respect for female artists in the US.

To further encourage women in their artistic pursuits, as art chair of the Delaware County Federation of Women’s Clubs from 1923 to 1925, Cochrane organized an exhibition of works by women artists. She recalled, “By the time we were through, virtually every club in the country had seen the exhibit and profited by it to the extent that the women’s clubs took up art seriously.” The legacy continues even today, as the Federation of Women’s Clubs holds annual art exhibits of members’ works.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 258]

[Word Count, as revised: 253]

HOWARD NORTON COOK (1901–1980)

Southern Mountaineer, 1936

Aquatint and soft ground etching



Howard Cook was born in Springfield, Massachusetts. At the age of 18, he attended the Art Students League in New York, supported by a scholarship and money made from painting billboards and working in a print shop. By 1922 he was selling illustrations to *Harper's Magazine*, *Scribner's Magazine*, and *The Atlantic Monthly*. He also illustrated the serial publication of Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, which ran in *The Forum* magazine in 1927. Travel to New Mexico for that project was inspirational, and the people, architecture, and landscape he found there permanently captured his imagination and was used in many subsequent works.

A Guggenheim Fellowship in 1932 allowed Cook to study mural painting in Mexico. This gave him the experience he needed when he received an award to paint a mural in Springfield's courthouse under the auspices of the Depression-era Public Works of Art Project. Also during the Depression, Cook traveled throughout the Southwest and Southeast, drawing pictures of people he encountered. His 1936 print *Southern Mountaineer* is possibly based on one or several of these drawings. Like other art of the time, this portrait evokes sympathy for the hardworking, downtrodden people affected by the Great Depression. Cook was particularly interested in observing the working poor in rural areas, especially the farmers, miners, and cowboys he lived among during that period.

Along with several other artists represented in the Alcott Collection, Cook used his skills as an artist during World War II, serving as an artist-correspondent in the Pacific and Alaska War Art Units. Later in life, he taught as a visiting professor at numerous institutions and exhibited widely.

[Word Count, Original: 255]

[Word Count, as revised: 269]

JOSEPHINE SIBLEY COUPER (1867–1957)

Southern Laundry, n.d.

Oil on canvas



Josephine Sibley Couper was the daughter of wealthy Augusta, Georgia, businessman Josiah Sibley, who secured his fortune before and increased it after the Civil War. Originally from Massachusetts, Josiah was an abolitionist who freed his slaves. Josephine was equally independent in her views. As a young woman, she defiantly sold a piece of furniture given to her by her grandfather in order to travel to New York to study painting with William Merritt Chase (1849–1916) at the Art Students League. Like Constance Cochrane,* she also studied with Elliott Daingerfield* at his summer studio in Blowing Rock, North Carolina.

In 1891 Josephine married Butler King Couper, and by 1900 had two children and was settled in Spartanburg, South Carolina. She continued with her painting, and, with her close friend and fellow artist Margaret Moffett Law* (aunt of Margaret L. Law, who married artist Homer F. Ellertson*), cofounded the Arts and Crafts Club (now the Spartanburg Art Museum). Their first exhibition ambitiously included the work of former teachers Robert Henri (1865–1929) and Chase.

A few years after her husband died, Josephine moved to Montreat, North Carolina. Eventually, she purchased a house and studio in Tryon, where she lived and painted for the last 25 years of her life. During this period, her style, palette, and subject matter changed from detailed realist portraiture (exemplified in a portrait of Lady Astor) to brightly colored and loosely painted scenes. *Southern Laundry* may date from these later years.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 262]

[Word Count, as revised: 257]

JOE COX (1915–1997)

Condoscape: Opus Blue, 1984

Oil on canvas



Joe Cox’s artistic oeuvre has been described as a world of color and light. He delighted in the notion of color’s kinetic quality and once explained that the origin of his fascination with color happened when he was a teenager in Indianapolis as a dust storm moved through town:

The storm changed the color of the sun to a brilliant blue, and shadows were brilliant yellow. The sky was dark. All the color relationships were reversed. . . . They made me realize how relative color is and how color changed, depending on other colors. From that point on I was always intrigued by color and change.

Cox began his education in art at the John Herron Art School in Indianapolis, where he earned a BFA, and continued at the University of Iowa, where he earned an MFA. Both schools afforded him a classical art education, and while his early work was realistic, his mature work was inspired by Cubism. By 1954 he was at the North Carolina State University School of Design, where he taught as a revered professor until 1980.

In 1958 Cox and his wife, Betty, purchased a home in Oriental, North Carolina, a small fishing village on Pamlico Sound. Every summer he returned there to paint, and the resulting works, such as *Condoscape: Opus Blue*, are some of his most beloved. In this painting, the architecture, sea, land, and color merge together. About the meeting of sea and land, Cox mused, “There is so much stimulation at the edge of anything, especially these two life forms.”

[Word Count, Original: 255]

[Word Count, as revised: 260]

IDA JOLLY CRAWLEY (1867–1946)

Untitled (still life with oranges, drapery, and glass), 1901

Oil on canvas



This untitled still life by Ida Jolly Crawley appears distinctly sedate compared to the woman who created it. Without a doubt, Crawley was a woman who would have been interesting to be around—or at least to visit on occasion. Originally from Tennessee, she moved to Asheville, North Carolina, in 1919, and she bought a 10,000-square-foot home at 31 Park Avenue. Built in a combination of Queen Anne, Eastlake, and Italianate styles, she fitted the home with art and antiques.

Crawley opened her home to the public as the city's first art museum, the Ida Jolly Crawley Museum of Art and Archaeology, or "the House of Pan." In 16 of the 25 rooms of the house, she displayed her own work as well as objects collected during her world travels. A sign over the mantel read:

Welcome to the House of Pan.
Muse O'er its Trophies,
 Its Owner
 Its Art.
From Dove-Tower to Crypt
 A Spirit You'll Find,
 A Personality of Heart.
 Has Each Life a Purpose,
A Bit of Earth to Design?
 Mold it Nobly,
 Infinite,
 Sublime.

—August 17, 1919
Ida Jolly Crawley

Crawley was a force. She painted, taught, wrote, and lectured. She traveled widely. Besides training at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, DC, she also studied in Germany and Paris, picking up medals for her painting while developing an interest in anthropology and archaeology along the way. In 1939 Crawley was listed in Durward Howes's *American Women: The Standard Biographical Dictionary of Notable Women*. She lived in her house museum until her death in 1946.

[Word Count, Original: 265]

[Word Count, as revised: 264]

ELLIOTT DAINGERFIELD (1859–1932)

In the Mountains, 1913

Oil on board



Elliott Daingerfield was born in Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now a part of West Virginia), but grew up in Fayetteville, North Carolina, where his father, a Confederate officer, was in charge of the arsenal. The Civil War affected Daingerfield profoundly: his family's home was burned to the ground, he watched many soldiers die, and he felt and observed the effects of Reconstruction poverty. These events stayed in his consciousness and imbued his artistic output with a great sense of spirituality.

Even as a young man, Daingerfield wanted to be an artist. He began by painting china and signs, but the impulse to study and create fine art drove him to New York. His father did not approve, but his mother gave him what money she had and encouraged his pursuit. In New York he studied at the National Academy of Design and the Art Students League, where he met important artists of the day and aligned himself with the Tonalist style and the Symbolist movement.

Tonalism is an apt description in the case of *In the Mountains*, with its romantic focus on nature, muted colors, studied effects of light and atmosphere, and vague shapes. Daingerfield's connection to the Symbolists is perhaps best described in his own words:

Spiritual vision is a message impacted to a man of genius, who, if he has the technical ability, may pass it on to the observer. . . . [I]t is the light of the spirit, the presence of something which has no material or objective expression.

[Word Count, Original: 244]

[Word Count, as revised: 251]

ELLIOTT DAINGERFIELD (1859–1932)

Sunset in the Mountains, n.d.

Pastel on paper



In 1916 the celebrated landscape artist and poet Elliott Daingerfield built a magnificent Greek Revival home he called Westglow that was beautifully situated near Grandfather Mountain in Blowing Rock, North Carolina. In words that echo the name he gave his estate, he wrote about the experience of living there:

The glow sinks down, the dark grows deep: Then I hear a voice in the slumberous air, the soft, sweet sigh of closed wings: My soul uplifts in silent prayer, for I know the message the Spirit brings.

Sunset in the Mountains further illustrates the quiet majesty Daingerfield found in the North Carolina mountains and his spiritual connection to the landscape. His deep spirituality was influenced by his interest in the religious philosophies of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772). Swedenborg's theology, based in Christianity, led him to the conviction that he could interact directly with heaven, hell, and the spirit world. Swedenborg inspired other poets and artists, such as William Blake (1757–1827), William Butler Yeats (1865–1939), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), and George Inness (1825–1894).

Other influences abounded in the development of Daingerfield's thinking and his art. He met Inness when he moved to the Holbein Studios on 55th Street in New York. At Holbein, Inness shared with Daingerfield ideals of the Barbizon School (a group of French landscape painters whose works marked the transition from Romanticism to Impressionism), and Daingerfield embraced their mission to elevate the art of landscape painting and to celebrate its metaphoric qualities.

[Word Count, Original: 249]

[Word Count, as revised: 249]

ELLIOTT DAINGERFIELD (1859–1932)

Autumn Afternoon, ca. 1915

Oil on board



In the decades before Elliott Daingerfield's maturation as a painter, American painting was marked by prominence of the Hudson River School painters. Their depiction of the American landscape's majesty and its promise for fulfilling Manifest Destiny and national prosperity was lauded and well known. Daingerfield's generation of painters, however, was more intent on expressing the spiritual and poetic forces of natural phenomena and individual human experience. Daingerfield was also influenced by the French Barbizon School, as well as American artists Albert Pinkham Ryder (1847–1917) and George Inness (1825–1894), who became influential leaders of the Symbolists.

As a Symbolist, Daingerfield embodied in his paintings the mystical forces of nature and art. Along with contacts made during his years of professional development, life experiences provided impetus for his personal quest. He grew up in the aftermath of the Civil War in Fayetteville, North Carolina, where he witnessed great poverty and privation. Later in his youth, he experienced a mystical revelation when a storm overwhelmed him and other members of a fishing party, and, in the midst of intense lightning, a cloud opened, and he saw a figure, which he believed to be Christ. Then, after the death of his wife, Roberta Strange French, in childbirth, he was also propelled into a spiritual, reflective mode.

All of these personal experiences provide rationale to Daingerfield's highly evocative paintings. As with *Autumn Afternoon*, each evokes a sense of reflection and searching through a very personal lens trained on the southern landscape and its history, which the artist knew so well.

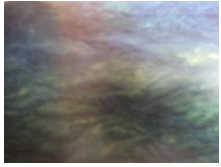
[Word Count, Original: 255]

[Word Count, as revised: 257]

JANE ECKENRODE (b. 1953)

Close to Shore, 2006–2007

Resin and fiberglass with acrylic and oil on wood



Inspired by art and science, Jane Eckenrode creates works that immerse the viewer in her intensely felt and vividly portrayed vision of the natural world. An avid hiker and kayaker, she records her experiences and translates them into alluring, shimmering surfaces, as with *Close to Shore*. This bas-relief piece was created in a multistep process. First, Eckenrode sculpted the shapes in foam. A flexible mold was then created from the sculpted foam, and the mold was used to cast the form in resin and fiberglass. The resulting piece was mounted and painted.

Eckenrode's skills were first developed as an undergraduate painting major at the Tyler School of Art (Temple University) and then at Virginia Commonwealth University, where she studied sculpture. Since the mid-1980s, she has worked as an artist-fabricator for Walt Disney World in Florida and in the field of fabrication art and design in San Francisco. In 1996 she moved to North Carolina, where she worked at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh, developing and creating exhibits.

As a member of North Carolina's Chatham Artists Guild, she has participated in the guild's studio tour, the oldest in the state. Her work is exhibited often in North Carolina's Triangle area in venues including the Somerhill Gallery in Chapel Hill and the Nature Art Gallery in Raleigh.

[Word Count, Original: 217]

[Word Count, as revised: 219]

HOMER F. ELLERTSON (1892–1935)

Tradition #1, n.d.

Oil on canvas



In 1920 Homer F. Ellertson moved from New York to Tryon, North Carolina. His move to Tryon and the development of his more mystical abstract style were likely influenced by painter Augustus Vincent Tack (1870–1949), who frequented Tryon and befriended Ellertson. The Tryon colony was already well known at the time and attracted not only talented professional artists but vacationers from among the country's elite—including Duncan Phillips, who acquired two of Ellertson's paintings for his public collection in Washington, DC.

In Tryon, Ellertson met Margaret L. Law (niece of painter Margaret Moffett Law*), whom he married in 1926. The couple traveled to Europe in 1927, but he maintained his connections to the wider artistic scene, especially that of New York. In 1930 he was included in an exhibition of works selected by renowned photographer and gallerist Alfred Stieglitz. In a March 1, 1930, review, *The New Yorker* compared his work to that of Precisionist painter Charles Demuth (1883–1935).

Many artistic movements of the period can be seen in *Tradition #1*: the ethereal, mystic nature of Abstract Expressionism, the movement found in Cubism, and the importance of color and defined shapes of Precisionism. The mountainous background seems to have been inspired by a view from the third-floor studio of his Tryon home, El Taarn. (Note a similar swirling field in Margaret Moffett Law's painting *Going to Market* in this exhibition.)

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 249]

[Word Count, as revised: 233]

HOMER F. ELLERTSON (1892–1935)

Carolina Landscape, ca. 1920

Charcoal on paper



Homer F. Ellertson, of Norwegian descent, grew up in River Falls, Wisconsin, and studied art at the River Falls State Normal School (now University of Wisconsin–River Falls). Like normal schools across the country, the school prepared students for roles as teachers. However, Ellertson had different aspirations and traveled to New York, where he entered the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn.

During his time at Pratt, Ellertson won a scholarship to travel to Paris. While traveling Europe, he was likely influenced by the Italian futurists, whose emphasis on the perception of speed and movement, the interpretation of the planar structure of objects in space, and an overall architectonic sensibility was creating a sensation at the time. Ellertson eventually returned to Pratt to complete his studies. Fulfilling the institute’s mission of preparing artists to make a living through their creative work, he became a successful designer of carpets, wallpapers, and textiles.

Like George Charles Aid,* Ellertson found his way to Tryon, North Carolina. There, he designed and built his home and studio, El Taarn (*El* for Ellertson, and *taarn*, Norwegian for “tower”). Featured in publications such as the November 1931 issue of *House Beautiful*, El Taarn exemplified the spirit of his work in three dimensions. Ellertson wrote in the *House Beautiful* article,

On a narrow spur at the southern end of the Blue Ridge Mountains, near Tryon, North Carolina, there is now this studio home which evolved from needs, both utilitarian and aesthetic.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 239]

[Word Count, as revised: 240]

MINNIE JONES EVANS (1892–1987)

Untitled, n.d.

Crayon on paper



Minnie Jones was born in Pender County, North Carolina. She went to school until the sixth grade and enjoyed learning about mythology. Married to Julius Evans at age 16, she began working in the home of Pembroke Jones at Pembroke Park Estate near Wrightsville Beach. On Good Friday 1935, compelled by a dream, she made her first drawing. “I had a dream, its voice spoke to me, ‘Why don’t you draw or die?’ ‘Is that it?’ I said, ‘My. My.’”

In 1948 Minnie Jones Evans served as the gatekeeper for Airlie Gardens (once private gardens for the Jones family). She often drew while in the gatehouse, and she sometimes sold her work to visitors. One visitor showed the work to a friend, writer and photographer Nina Howell Starr, who later helped Evans promote her work. In 1975 Evans had a solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. Her works have been categorized as folk art, visionary art, mystical abstraction, and surrealism.

This untitled drawing is characteristic of her compulsively complex and beautifully hypnotic use of color, pattern, and symmetry. She developed these highly spiritual compositions spontaneously to provide conscious evidence of her unconscious mind’s dreams and visions. One can also see remnants of the visible world, such as eyes, flora, and fauna. She loved the natural world and once mused,

Green is a beautiful color. God dressed this world in green. The green shrubbery comes first. We should love the green shrubs, because they come before the blooms.

[Word Count, Original: 250]

[Word Count, as revised: 246]

FRANK FAULKNER (b. 1945)

Abstraction, 1992

Mixed media on board



Frank Faulkner grew up in Charlotte, North Carolina, and attended the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill for both his undergraduate and graduate degrees in art. In the 1970s and 1980s, when conceptual and minimal art trends were the order of the day, Faulkner chose a different direction, creating highly rhythmic, patterned, and decorative works. Faulkner explains,

[M]y interests and inspirations were from antique textiles, frescos, metalwork, tiling, and jewelry. I was particularly inspired by the rhythmic, sometimes obsessive accretions and layering of patterns and textures of ancient artifacts and surfaces.

As a self-described “structural abstractionist,” Faulkner finds meaning in his compulsive process.

It takes a rhythmic obsession that transcends patience. It probably is an altered state of consciousness. . . . You get very, very focused on what you do. You project yourself so deeply into these systems and into the space that you’re beginning to create, there is something exhilarating.

In a 1992 article, art critic Chuck Twardy explained Faulkner’s technique:

Upon a free-form field of colors, he sets successive layers of paint, eventually building a dense pattern of extruded marks that give the surface a textile-like tactility. These thick strands of iridescent paint, generally gold or silver, reflect and modulate light. Faulkner compares the effect for which he strives with that of a line of light striking an oil slick, a skein of silk, or a record.

[Word Count, Original: 234]

[Word Count, as revised: 230]

WILLIAM CHARLES ANTHONY FRERICHS (1829–1905)

Untitled (near Linville, North Carolina), ca. 1861

Oil on board



William Frerichs was born in Ghent, then part of the Netherlands. As a young man, he reputedly studied painting at the Royal Academy in The Hague with landscape painter Andreas Schelfhout (1787–1870). Armed with letters of introduction to prominent New Yorkers, Frerichs immigrated to New York in 1850 to develop his career. By 1852 he had exhibited at the National Academy of Design. In 1854 he married Clara Butler, whose friend, Methodist minister and president of Greensboro Female College (now Greensboro College) Charles F. Deems, offered him a position as professor of arts and languages.

Frerichs found the landscape in western North Carolina—especially the Sauratown Mountains northwest of Greensboro and the Southern Highlands to the west—inspiring. Many of his paintings, such as this untitled work, include elements he found there: views of distant mountains, beautiful skies with billowing cloud forms, picturesque bodies of water, and streams cascading over rugged rocks. The scene may depict Peak Mountain against a backdrop of Blue Ridge mountain wilderness near what today is the town of Linville (established 1883) in Avery County.

The events of the period were challenging for Frerichs. During the Civil War, he was conscripted by Confederate forces as a civil engineer. The biggest blow to his success came in 1863, when a fire destroyed the Greensboro college's main building, where his studio was housed. By 1865 he and his family had returned to Tottenville, Staten Island, New York, where he lived and painted until his death.

[Word Count, Original: 260]

[Word Count, as revised: 254]

MAUD FLORANCE GATEWOOD (1934–2004)

Farm Pond—Snow Ending, 1975

Acrylic on canvas



Born in Yanceyville, North Carolina, and educated at the University of North Carolina–Greensboro and Ohio State University, Maud Gatewood was an artistic force in North Carolina for more than four decades. Critics described her work as “the distilled essence of the South” and the artist herself as “a stylizing sophisticated-primitive realist.” The *Raleigh News & Observer*’s obituary stated, “Gatewood was arguably the most important living North Carolina painter.”

Gatewood worked from memory, and beginning in the mid-1960s, employed a master striper tool (as used in automobile detailing) to paint images that art historian Robert Hobbs categorized as “stringently abstract paintings” that were “disguised as a realistic scene.” Her use of a commercial tool is akin to Roy Lichtenstein’s (1923–1997) use of benday dots. Lichtenstein, like Gatewood, was interested in mechanical processes that produced an industrial appearance in a fine arts realm.

Farm Pond—Snow Ending was created during the height of Gatewood’s spray-gun period. It depicts elements known to the artist from her childhood in Caswell County, North Carolina: a pond with water, pinkish from clay soil; white clapboard siding; and snow, prevalent in the area due to its particular geographic anomalies. Close observation reveals a graphic precision of lines in the tree to the left and in the fence posts to the right, a careful light-to-dark gradation, and a pattern imposed as a grid, created by white dots over the painted surface—which also double as falling snow.

[Word Count, Original: 243]

[Word Count, as revised: 240]

GINA GILMOUR (b. 1948)

The Survivor Series (also known as *The Rescue Series*) No. 8, 1984

Oil on canvas



“There’s a compulsion to tell a story when you’re having a big feeling,” says artist Gina Gilmour, “but then the viewer has to be able to relate to it without knowing the story.” For viewers of Gilmour’s painting, the tension of not knowing yet wanting to relate is part of the compelling nature of the work. Of Gilmour’s work in the exhibition *Nine from North Carolina*, curator Jane Kessler wrote, “Her dreamlike paintings represent times of struggle, periods of transition or moments of resolution.” Yet just whose struggle this is, who is undergoing change here and why, remains a mystery.

Gilmour’s work has been compared to that of William Blake (1757–1827) for its spiritual qualities and stylistic approach. Elements are symbolic and a means to begin to access the painting. Figures, shown in Red Cross–style rescue positions used by lifeguards, point to an incomplete story, but the painting’s metaphoric qualities and the emotions it elicits are powerful. A 1988 review in *New Art Examiner* stated, “Gilmour perches her figures on the threshold of life and death, of exhaustion and exhilaration, of safety and risk. In her studied exploration of this threshold lies much power.”

Gilmour was born in Charlotte, North Carolina. She earned her bachelor’s degree from Sarah Lawrence College, and today lives in Mattituck, New York. She has been recognized by numerous organizations, including the MacDowell Colony, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Her works have been shown nationally, with exhibitions at such institutions as the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the North Carolina Museum of Art, and the Mint Museum.

[Word Count, Original: 297]

[Word Count, as revised: 273]

PAUL HARTLEY (1943–2008)

Lemon on Fiddle Eve, n.d.

Acrylic and oil on canvas



Paul Hartley was born in Charlotte, North Carolina, and grew up in Atlanta, Georgia. After returning to his native North Carolina, to attend graduate school at East Carolina University (ECU), he never left again. He earned an MFA in 1970, then spent the next 35 years teaching at ECU and influencing thousands of students. Scott Eagle, a former student and now assistant director of ECU’s School of Art and Design, reflected on Hartley’s usually quiet nature: “He had an amazing ability to simply show up at the right time whenever you needed help with anything, and he knew what you needed.”

Hartley’s pensive demeanor is also reflected in his art. He combined hyper-realism with stylized naturalism and abstraction to create technically adept and seamlessly integrated images that are as spatially complex as they are rich in interpretive possibility. The density of Hartley’s work aside, critic Kate Dobbs Ariel once suggested that he, importantly, “reminds us to appreciate what he has called ‘the simple beauty of an isolated object.’”

For the most part, Hartley wished his work to speak for itself. However, in 1977 he offered to writer Melissa Clement, “The things that fascinate me are geometric patterns, space, and the juxtaposition of these different levels of space.” Clement then reflected, “Not only is it a pleasure to see Hartley’s technical mastery but it is also fascinating to become involved in his game of space relationships which is almost as mysterious as his incongruent use of subject matter.”

[Word Count, Original: 246]

[Word Count, as revised: 248]

SILVIA HEYDEN (b. 1927)

In the Weeds, n.d

High-warp linen tapestry



Silvia Heyden was born in Basel, Switzerland, and she once aspired to be a violin maker. Since girls were not permitted to apprentice, however, the talented violinist's father encouraged her to take up another form of art. In response, she went to Zurich and studied with Bauhaus master Johannes Itten (1888–1967), a color theorist and later director of a textile art school. The Bauhaus was notable for teaching crafts alongside fine art and for emphasizing a rational, practical approach to materials and processes.

Heyden believes, "Tapestry is an art form in its own right with its own specific mode of expression." Her aim, she says, "was to discover the essence of tapestry weaving so that the medium could find its own voice. This approach meant that I viewed my work at the loom as a dialogue, an interactive giving and taking." Her work to champion tapestry as fine art has made her an internationally known fiber artist. Critics align her with American Abstract Expressionism for her gestural freedom and improvisational method.

Heyden's tapestries emphasize harmony, rhythm, and pattern. She notes that, like music, weaving is bound to time in how the art is revealed. In addition to finding relevance in her love of music, Heyden is inspired by elements found in the natural world: memories of mountainous Switzerland and landscape scenes around Durham, North Carolina, such as the Eno River, where she moved in 1966 when her husband became a professor at Duke University's medical school.

[Word Count, Original: 250]

[Word Count, as revised: 244]

ANNE FRANCES HILL (1932–2008)

Untitled, n.d.

Ink on paper



In describing Anne Frances Hill's 1988 exhibition *What You See Is Not Necessarily What You Get*, a critic wrote,

Colorful pen-and-ink compositions with exacting geometric designs are juxtaposed with bizarre things like a trash bag spouting a shredded copy of the US Constitution. But the whole is greater, or at least stranger, than the sum of its parts, and ultimately, the show provides an insight into an artist whose life is charged with eccentricity.

Anne Hill focused on concepts and objects being a jumping-off point for discussion and storytelling—in fact, she filled her everyday life with such opportunities. Hill's home, Merry Oaks, had once been an inn, but the house and grounds in her time were filled with animals of all sorts. In addition, artworks-in-progress could be found from the dining room to the porch, and a hallway was papered with hubcaps and draped with twinkle lights.

Hill had a traditional education at the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina (now UNC–Greensboro), where she studied art with Gregory Ivy.* She also earned a master's degree in library services at Columbia University. Back in Raleigh, North Carolina, she taught briefly at Meredith College and worked in a Wake County library—until she decided to be, as she put it, “self-unemployed,” making money by selling her art and hiring herself out as a storyteller.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 260]

[Word Count, as revised: 226]

CLAUDE FLYNN HOWELL (1915–1997)

Loading Nets, Ocracoke, 1984

Oil on canvas



With the exception of art lessons given to him as a teenager, Claude Howell was essentially self-taught. His father died shortly after the beginning of the Great Depression, and to support his mother and himself, he went to work for the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad by day; by night he painted. Work at the railroad afforded Howell travel to New York and Washington, DC, where he could frequent museums and visit artist colonies.

Impressed by Howell's work, his work ethic, and his professional involvement in the art world, Dr. William Randall, president of Wilmington College (now University of North Carolina–Wilmington, UNC-W), asked him to start an art department at the college in 1953. Howell began teaching one night a week, then several nights, and then full-time when the demand for classes was enough. He taught there until his retirement in 1981. While he never attended college, his impact on art in North Carolina was recognized with honorary degrees from Wake Forest University and from his hometown UNC-W.

Perhaps due to accidental poisoning contracted as he worked on a large mosaic, Howell became paralyzed in 1965. He worked for two years to recover and to learn to paint again, setting a goal of being able to paint perfectly straight edges. In relearning his passion, he discovered he loved to work that way. He also chose a brighter palette, inspired by the hues he observed in coastal Wilmington. *Loading Nets, Ocracoke* is emblematic of the style he developed.

[Word Count, Original: 245]

[Word Count, as revised: 251]

RUDOLPH FRANK INGERLE (1879–1950)

October in the Smokies, n.d.

Oil on canvas



Born in Vienna, Austria, Rudolph Frank Ingerle first trained as a musician and second as an artist, studying at John Francis Smith's Art Academy and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. In Chicago, Ingerle was a member and one-time president of the Chicago Society of Painters.

While his home base was always Chicago, he was particularly drawn to rural and mountainous areas as sources of inspiration for his work. In rural Brown County, Indiana, he painted alongside artist Theodore Clement Steele (1847–1926). The Ozark Mountains of Missouri also held great appeal for Ingerle. There, he founded the Society of Ozark Painters.

Traveling to western North Carolina in the 1920s, Ingerle was captivated by the region's beauty and the hardworking lifestyle of people who lived there. *October in the Smokies* is just one of many dramatic paintings completed during his forays to the area. Ingerle's ability to capture the grandeur and glorious colors of each season earned him the moniker "Painter of the Smokies."

[Word Count, Original: 193]

[Word Count, as revised: 176]

RUDOLPH FRANK INGERLE (1879–1950)

Charm of the Smokies, n.d.

Oil on canvas



At age 12, Rudolph Ingerle immigrated to the US with his parents, who settled in Burlington, Wisconsin, and then, by 1891, in Chicago. Like many of his Chicago counterparts, Ingerle made his way to Tryon, North Carolina, to paint in the inspirational atmosphere of the state's far southwestern reaches. Ingerle found a profound connection to western North Carolina, as it reminded him of his family's ancestral home in Moravia (a historical country that is now part of the Czech Republic).

In 1922 he traveled farther north and west to explore the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina and the Cumberland Mountains of Tennessee, and by 1926 he had established himself as one of the premier interpreters of the region. Like many artists and writers during the post–World War I era, he joined the movement to preserve the Great Smoky Mountains as a national park, and he returned every few months to paint in the area.

Charm of the Smokies is inscribed, presumably by the artist himself, on the reverse:

To
Mr. Mrs. Louis A. Heile
With best Wishes for Health and Contentment
February 26 - 1949

According to the 1940 US Census, a Louis A. and Harriet Heile were residents of Chicago. Their home, built in 1895, still exists at 2743 North Pine Grove Avenue in the Lincoln Park neighborhood.

[Word Count, Original: 216]

[Word Count, as revised: 222]

GREGORY IVY (1904–1985)

Untitled, 1949

Gouache and watercolor on paper



Gregory Ivy's full legacy includes not only his accomplished artworks, but also the institutions he built and the careers he furthered at the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina (now UNC–Greensboro), where he served as the first art department chair (he started there in 1934), built the department, and established the gallery now known as the Weatherspoon Art Museum. He demanded much of his students—who included Lucy McDonald “Mackey” Bane,* Maud Florance Gatewood,* and Anne Frances Hill*—as he emphasized experimentation, expression, creativity, and freedom of thought. Ivy's quest brought important artists and art to campus. Works by Oskar Kokoschka (1886–1990) and Alexander Calder (1898–1976) are a part of the university's collection, thanks to Ivy.

Ivy's art and teaching were based on ideals championed by Alfred Stieglitz (1864–1946) and influenced by the Transcendental Painting Group, which, in quoting from the group's manifesto, intended “to carry painting beyond the appearance of the physical world, through new concepts of space, color, light, and design, to imaginative realms that are idealistic and spiritual.”

Calder's influence—the wire-like lines and organic shapes in solid colors, reminiscent of Calder's mobiles—is evident in this untitled gouache and watercolor painting from 1949. Both artists, like other modernists of the day—such as Joan Miro (1893–1983), Jean Arp (1886–1966), and John Marin (1870–1953)—wanted to find ways to convey equivalents for such invisible entities as force, space, and time.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 252]

[Word Count, as revised: 244]

HERB JACKSON (b. 1945)

Veronica's Veil, CLXXVII, 2007

Acrylic on canvas



Raleigh native Herb Jackson attended Davidson College and in 1969 accepted a temporary job teaching there. More than 40 years later, after making an enormous impact on the college by building its art collection and ushering in the Belk Visual Arts Center, he retired as a professor. He earned an MFA from the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill in 1970.

Veronica's Veil, CLXXVII is from an extensive series that Jackson began in 1980. The series takes its name from the story of St. Veronica. As Jesus Christ carried the cross on which he was to be crucified to Calvary, he stopped, and Veronica offered her veil for him to wipe his face. Miraculously, an image of Christ's face was transferred onto the cloth. The Roman numerals with the title refer to the number of the painting in the series. This is painting number 177.

Like Veronica's veil, Jackson's canvases are an imprint of his "visual thinking" on canvas. On his "veil"—his canvas—an image appears that, over time and through space (via changes effected by multiple reworkings), reflects his interaction with the world of experience. In his self-described "gestural abstract painting," Jackson uses a back-and-forth process of layering color and scraping away and digging into parts of the work in progress. The results are dynamic, with an overall feeling of spatial movement. Receding and advancing, the shapes depict a three-dimensional illusion. The collages of Kurt Schwitters (1887–1948) and old walls in European cities covered with layers and layers of posters ripped and torn serve as inspiration for Jackson.

[Word Count, Original: 268]

[Word Count, as revised: 264]

MARY ANNE KEEL JENKINS (b. 1929)

Beer with Head, 1968

Acrylic and oil on canvas



Mary Anne Keel was born in Stokes, North Carolina, a small community in Pitt County near Greenville, where she grew up. She attended East Carolina University in Greenville for her freshman year, and then transferred to the Ferree School of Art in Raleigh, where she earned a diploma in fine arts. After graduation, she worked at the *Raleigh Times* and married G. G. Jenkins Jr.

While she felt the expectation that a woman of her era not be employed, Mary Anne remained adamant about continuing her work as an artist. Her mature work centered on Abstract Expressionism and, in the 1960s, color-field painting, which *Beer with Head* exemplifies. Her work later moved away from field painting, but she remained devoted to abstraction and nonrepresentational painting.

Throughout her adult life, Jenkins was very involved in the Raleigh arts scene. In addition to teaching continuing education classes at North Carolina State University, she also taught at the Pullen Arts Center for many years. For years, too, she served on the City of Raleigh Arts Commission and the city's Art in Public Places Task Force. When she was honored in 1994 with the Raleigh Medal of Arts, the award's glowing citation included these words: "She was active in art projects, art movements, and the politics of art. . . . She relentlessly promoted the art scene as a cultural necessity for our citizens."

[Word Count, Original: 241]

[Word Count, as revised: 227]

MARY ANNE KEEL JENKINS (b. 1929)

Up Stream, 1968

Acrylic and oil on canvas



Early works by Mary Anne Keel Jenkins consisted of tried-and-true genres executed in a realistic manner: still lifes, figure paintings, and portraits. Not until the late 1950s did she begin to experiment with Abstract Expressionism. Perhaps exhibitions including the works of Richard Diebenkorn (1922–1993) and Franz Kline (1910–1962) at the North Carolina Museum of Art during that time inspired her. Regardless, by 1962 she was using acrylic paints, which were becoming more popular.

In 1967 she began her poured color-field painting series, which resulted in *Beer with Head** and *Up Stream*. Color-field paintings emphasize color over form. Developed in the 1950s as an outcropping of Abstract Expressionism, most color-field paintings elicit in viewers a sense of being enveloped by expanses of color, which seemingly extend beyond the canvas. Nationally known artists such as Mark Rothko (1903–1970), Morris Louis (1912–1962), and Helen Frankenthaler (1928–2011) worked in this mode. Jenkins’s method of pouring paint on a canvas is most related to Louis.

Jenkins believes her color-field paintings are emblematic of her life during the late 1960s, when she was going through a divorce. She attests that they express anguish, joy, and spiritual reconciliation. When she was awarded the Raleigh Medal of Arts, landscape architect and presenter Dick Bell stated, “The life and times of an artist are usually the story of a survivalist, and Jenkins is no different.”

*This work is also represented in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 240]

[Word Count, as revised: 233]

MARGARET MOFFETT LAW (1871–1956)

Going to Market, n.d.

Gouache and watercolor on paper



Going to Market is emblematic of Margaret Moffett Law's enthusiastic commitment to American scene painting and to the teachings of Robert Henri (1865–1929), who also fostered the notion that women artists were equal to men. Her matter-of-fact realism depicts rural southern life but belies her upbringing as a privileged white woman from the South at the turn of the 20th century. Her depictions are not romantic or sentimental—the harvested field pulsates with heat like the sun at midday; the horse seems to move slowly, as if exhausted from exertion; and the riders shade themselves from the brutal heat for which the South is so well known.

Margaret Moffett was born in Spartanburg, South Carolina. She studied at Converse College for Women (now Converse College), the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, and Cooper Union, as well as the Art Students League in New York with William Merritt Chase (1849–1916). She taught at the Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore, Maryland, in the 1920s, until moving back to Spartanburg, where she taught in the public schools.

Spartanburg was only a short train ride from the vibrant artist colony of Tryon, North Carolina, and her nearby presence was a great support to her dear friend Josephine Sibley Couper* and to her niece Margaret L. Law, who lost her husband, artist Homer F. Ellertson,* in 1935. Margaret Moffett Law's independence, energy, and fearlessness abounded even into her 70s, when she drove alone across Mexico.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 264]

[Word Count, as revised: 240]

ROBERT PEARSON LAWRENCE (1883–1970)

Rain Clouds No. 3, n.d.

Oil on canvas board



Robert P. Lawrence settled in Tryon, North Carolina, in the 1950s and spent the next 20 years painting pictures of the beautiful landscape he saw in the western part of the state. In *Rain Clouds No. 3*, he captures the dramatic scene of clouds gathering in the distance while sunshine illuminates a rich fall color in the foreground. His balance of colors and contrasting light brings out the magnificence of this phenomenon of weather and nature.

Before moving to Tryon, Lawrence exhibited his art in New York with the Hudson Valley Art Association and the notable Salmagundi Club, of which he was a member. During World War II, he served as a visual artist in the USO (United Service Organizations), best known for providing entertainment to the troops with stage performers, such as Bob Hope. Artists did their part, as well; Lawrence, for example, made portraits of wounded soldiers at Ashford General Hospital (formerly the Greenbrier Hotel) in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia.

Earlier in his career, Lawrence created illustrations for *Life* magazine and *Woman's Home Companion*, as well as for several novels. He was educated at the Pratt Institute, the Art Students League, and the Woodstock Art Colony. He was born in Setauket, New York.

[Word Count, Original: 238]

[Word Count, as revised: 204]

FREDA WIDDER LEDFORD (1894–1959)

Winter Stream, n.d.

Watercolor



Winter Stream has the lyrical and painterly brush strokes Freda Widder Ledford likely learned while studying at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts with such realist artists as Joseph T. Pearson Jr. (1876–1951), Philip Leslie Hale (1865–1931), and Emil Carlsen (1853–1932). During the time, Ledford won several student prizes, which afforded her travel to Europe. There, she attended the University for Foreigners Perugia in Italy.

Following her foreign studies, Ledford returned home to Pennsylvania to work as an artist at a Harrisburg printing company. After she married in 1924, she settled in Amarillo, Texas, where her husband was employed, and taught art. She later returned to Pennsylvania and became active in the community of Reading—as an artist, an organizer of arts events, and a contributing member of civic organizations. A 1938 article in the Reading *Eagle* noted that, in addition to drawing, painting, and doing interior design work, Ledford had published several series of children’s stories with her own illustrations. She remained an active instructor and artist throughout her life.

Ledford’s widowed mother died in Harrisburg in 1945. Perhaps this event broke the daughter’s ties to Pennsylvania, as she moved that same year with her husband and their daughter to Asheville, North Carolina. The natural beauty of western North Carolina likely gave her much delight as an artist, especially since she was known for her pictures of flowers and landscapes. The mountains of the Southeast had caught her painter’s eye on an earlier visit; according to a 1938 article in the Reading *Times*, she painted “from memory” a Tennessee mountain scene.

[Word Count, Original: 290]

[Word Count, as revised: 264]

FREDA WIDDER LEDFORD (1894–1959)

Old Tree, n.d.

Oil on canvas



Freda Widder was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) with notable artists that included Cecilia Beaux (1855–1942), one of the most prominent portrait painters of her day and the first woman to teach at PAFA. Because women artists over the centuries faced the dilemma of whether it was possible to be—and if so, how to be—serious professional artists as well as wives and mothers, Widder declined a number of marriage proposals so that she could focus on painting.

Indeed, as newspaper clippings make clear, following her 1924 marriage, Freda Widder, prize-winning artist, did become Mrs. Harris A. Ledford. The talented painter—who had designed covers for *Better Homes and Gardens*, *The American Home*, and *The Garden*—disappeared into marriage and motherhood in Reading, Pennsylvania. A member of small-city society, accounts of her activities are sparse and brief during those years, yet she managed to keep her hand in teaching art, organizing local art displays, and exhibiting her own existing work.

In 1945 Ledford moved to Asheville with her husband and daughter. There, she became involved with the local art community, taught as an art instructor at the Asheville Country Day School, helped begin the Asheville Art Museum, and made wonderful paintings like *Old Tree*. She died 14 years later in Charlotte in the care of her daughter.

[Word Count, Original: 248]

[Word Count, as revised: 231]

EDITH CASPARY LONDON (1904–1997)

Floating, 1977

Collage



Edith Caspary was born in Prussia. She studied art at the Verein der Berliner Künstlerinnen in Germany and the British Academy in Rome. In 1929 she married Fritz London, who was then a physics instructor at Berlin University. In 1933, however, with Adolf Hitler in power, Fritz was dismissed because of his Jewish faith. He first secured another position in London and then another in Paris. But fearing the Jewish situation in Europe would only worsen, in 1939 he accepted a physics professorship at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina.

In Durham, Edith raised their children and supported her husband's career. Only after Fritz died of a heart attack in 1954 did she reenter the world of art: working as a slide librarian at the Duke University Museum of Art. Once her children were grown, she returned to creating art, and upon her retirement in 1969, she was at the height of her artistic production. London was supported by her friend, artist Silvia Heyden,* whose husband had also been at Duke, who cheered her on as she worked as an abstractionist, painting and creating collages such as this piece.

Memories of escaping the Holocaust and the deaths of so many she knew haunted London. She once said, “What my art has given me is the ability to keep going.” As for the colors and style she used, “The black, I’m sure, has something to do with reflecting on my life experiences. I give in to my changing needs. I am true to my conscience.”

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 259]

[Word Count, as revised: 252]

HENRY JAY MacMILLAN (1908–1991)

Into the Hollow, 1938

Oil on canvas



A native of Wilmington, North Carolina, Henry MacMillan left the state at age 18 to study art in New York. With courses in architecture and interior design at the New York School of Fine and Applied Art (now Parsons School of Design), he graduated from the school's Paris branch in 1929. Upon his return to the US, MacMillan was active in the New York and Washington, DC, art scenes, working for interior design firms and even exhibiting a painting at the 1939 New York World's Fair. *Into the Hollow* was painted during this period, a time when he had gone back to his hometown and, along with Claude Flynn Howell,* was helping to establish the Wilmington Museum of Art (a WPA project) and an associated art school. MacMillan headed the school until 1942, when the museum and school closed, and he joined World War II.

During the war, MacMillan used his artistic skills as a combat artist in North Africa, Sicily, Normandy, Belgium, Holland, and Germany, making paintings for the US Army that depicted wartime destruction, battlefield landscapes, and military life. After the war, he attended the Art Students League in New York and served as an instructor at his alma mater in New York.

In 1956 MacMillan returned to Wilmington, again, painting, exhibiting his work, and serving as a leader for many cultural and historical organizations. It is said that, although he grew “crusty” with advancing age, he could always use his aristocratic southern drawl to good effect.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 284]

[Word Count, as revised: 249]

LAWRENCE MAZZANOVICH (1872–1959)

Near Tryon, North Carolina, after 1923

Oil on canvas



In the early 1920s, Chicago art dealer Vincent O'Brien said to Lawrence Mazzanovich (who was living in Connecticut at the time),

What you ought to do is to go down to the Blue Ridge mountains in western Carolina and really paint that country. No one yet has dared to do it, but you can if you will. There's a little town called Tryon, which is one of the most attractive spots in the whole region, and I know you can get fresh inspiration there.

While Mazzanovich had achieved solid recognition by this time, the idea appealed to his spiritual nature.

Unfortunately, his wife did not wish to move, and since their relationship had been a difficult one, they divorced. In Tryon, Mazzanovich found what he was looking for—a place where he finally felt at home and at peace. He also met Muriel Harrington, a piano teacher whom he thought of as his soul mate. (Harrington would eventually teach Eunice Waymons, a Tryon youngster who changed her name and became famous as Nina Simone.) The couple built a home and studio there, and for the rest of his life, Mazzanovich worked in the Impressionist style exemplified in this painting, *Near Tryon, North Carolina*.

A 1926 article described “Muzzy,” as he was known, as

a picturesque figure. Tall and lithe, with iron gray hair and an expansive smile, he has swung himself into the hearts of young and old. He sings well, loves sociability, and thrives in the out-door warmth and sunshine of this region.

[Word Count, Original: 265]

[Word Count, as revised: 254]

JAMES AUGUSTUS McLEAN (1904–1989)

At the Railroad Shops, Smoky Hollow, Raleigh, North Carolina, ca. 1930

Oil on canvas



This painting depicts the Raleigh, North Carolina, working-class neighborhood called Smoky Hollow, which existed between Peace Street and Boylan Heights prior to the 1960s. Smoky Hollow was named for the smoke that rose from nearby railroad yards and mills and often settled in the low-lying area. Jim McLean would have known the area well at the time he painted this scene because, after graduating from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA), he had recently arrived to accept an offer to establish an art school. The project was close to his heart, as he remembered what it was like to grow up poor in rural Lincoln County, with no opportunities to study art.

McLean had always wanted to be an artist. At 19 he saw an ad for PAFA and on a lark applied. Late in March 1923, he heard back: not only would he be welcome as a student, but if he could be at the school by April 1, he could also have a job to help pay for his education. Accepting money for the journey from a family friend and leaving a note for his mother, he took the train to Philadelphia that very day. At PAFA, McLean was highly successful, and he won the respect of faculty, which extended to him a teaching offer upon graduation. He chose, instead, to return home and make his impact as a teacher and art advocate.

[Word Count, Original: 246]

[Word Count, as revised: 237]

JAMES AUGUSTUS McLEAN (1904–1989)

North Raleigh, 1930

Linocut



Jim McLean had deep passion for and commitment to art and his home state of North Carolina. He spent more than 60 years creating opportunities for art students and artists and being an artist himself. His tremendous dedication began in 1929, when he returned home to Raleigh from studies in Philadelphia, encouraged by members of the North Carolina State Art Society (precursor to the state Museum of Art), to start the Southern School of Creative Arts.

The year 1929 was not an auspicious inaugural year, and Black Tuesday and the Great Depression hit the fledgling school hard financially. McLean, nevertheless, pressed onward. After President Franklin Roosevelt initiated the Works Progress Administration and its subsidiary Federal Art Project (FAP), McLean set up a program for North Carolina. Through FAP, he and some of his students painted public murals for Greensboro High School (now Grimsley Senior High School), North Carolina State College (now North Carolina State University, NCSU), and the public library in Concord.

McLean also directed the Raleigh Community Art Center and participated in development of the Raleigh Little Theatre—he even sculpted the plaque over the building’s entrance, leading to a logo that is still in use. Hundreds of thousands of students over the years were taught by McLean at NCSU, Shaw University, St. Augustine’s College, and the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill (UNC-CH). Not only did he participate in establishing a fine arts department at UNC-CH and a school of design at NCSU, but he also advocated for the North Carolina School of the Arts—keeping the commitment that had brought him home.

[Word Count, Original: 252]

[Word Count, as revised: 265]

LEO JOHN MEISSNER (1895–1977)

Jeter Spivey's Place, 1955

Wood engraving



Leo Meissner was born in Hamtramck, Michigan, a town now surrounded by the city limits of Detroit. Though poor, he attended the Detroit School of Fine Arts until enlisting in the US Army and serving in France during World War I. When he returned to Detroit following military service, he resumed his art studies, eventually winning a scholarship to take classes at the Art Students League in New York. There, he studied with American realist painter George Luks (1867–1933).

To support himself, Meissner started working in the magazine industry, first as an assistant at *Charm* magazine in the early 1920s. He also sold paintings, as well as masterful woodcuts and engravings. He retired from magazines in 1950, after serving as art editor at *Motor Boating* magazine. He then devoted himself to his art full-time, married, and settled in Monhegan, Maine, an island off the coast that he had visited almost yearly since 1923.

In an article for *Down East*, a magazine about Maine, reporter Isabel Currier quoted a resident of the island making an observation:

Leo Meissner's an awful hard worker; starts early every morning and never stops. . . . [H]e's a city fellow, but he's no slicker; a homey man, easy to talk to . . . his pictures make something you see every day look wonderful. . . . [I] can't remember the island in summer without Leo, but he doesn't seem to have changed much in all the years he's been here.

[Word Count, Original: 287]

[Word Count, as revised: 247]

LEO JOHN MEISSNER (1895–1977)

Crabtree Bald, Smokies, n.d.

Conté crayon on paper



Crabtree Bald, Smokies depicts the highest peak—located in Haywood County, North Carolina—of the Great Balsam Mountain range. Leo Meissner began visiting North Carolina and the Great Smoky Mountains in the 1950s. He particularly enjoyed scenes with isolated mountain cabins, small farms, and rushing mountain streams.

Though Meissner grew up in metropolitan Detroit and worked in New York for decades, isolated, harsh environments provided him with artistic inspiration. It is said that crossing the Atlantic Ocean to serve in France during World War I ignited a love of nature's power and drama. In addition to the mountains of North Carolina, he was known for his images of the rugged coast of Maine, which he also visited frequently, and the deserts of Arizona.

Meissner remained active in the art world in New York and nationally even after he retired to his Maine studio to paint and practice his medium of choice, wood engraving, which he largely learned by himself. He was a member of such organizations as the Society of American Graphic Artists, the Boston Printmakers, the Salmagundi Club, and the Philadelphia Print Club. A full academician of the National Academy of Design, he established the Leo J. Meissner prize in printmaking. His works can be found in the Library of Congress, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, among others.

[Word Count, Original: 206]

[Word Count, as revised: 224]

PHILIP ANTHONY MOOSE (1921–2001)

Still Life Abstract, n.d.

Oil on Masonite



Raised in Newton, North Carolina, near Hickory, Philip Anthony Moose wanted to be an artist even as a little boy. However, he was poor and had to work hard to earn money and scholarships to afford an education in art. After joining the US Army during World War II, he was able to attend Columbia University with support from the GI Bill.

Moose stayed in New York after two years at Columbia, studying at the National Academy of Design. There, his talent was recognized with a 1948 prize from the Pulitzer Foundation. The New York *Herald Tribune* reported award winners, mentioning that,

Philip Anthony Moose, 27, of 139 West Ninety-fifth Street, who is working as a freelance portrait painter, received a \$1,500 scholarship as the American art student certified by the National Academy of Design as “the most promising and deserving” in the country.

With this scholarship, Moose was able to study at the recently founded Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine.

By 1951 Moose was teaching visual arts on a part-time basis at Davidson College in North Carolina. He also was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to study in Munich, Germany. In later years, he returned to North Carolina, as he had always hoped to do, and established a studio in Blowing Rock. While this particular work is decidedly abstract, Moose was perhaps best known for his landscapes. In 1977 it was reported that he had painted more than 200 views of Grandfather Mountain.

[Word Count, Original: 246]

[Word Count, as revised: 246]

(ALBERT) KENNETH NESS (1903–2001)

Sunrise Across the River, ca. 1935

Oil on plywood



Born in St. Ignace, Michigan, Kenneth Ness worked at a variety of jobs while training to be an artist—first helping at his parents' stationery shop and bookstore and later writing and lettering show cards and posters and creating designs and displays for commercial enterprises. *Sunrise Across the River* was painted after he had finished his studies at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The painting is emblematic of the transition in American art from realism to abstraction.

His long career as an artist/educator began in 1941 when hired as a Carnegie Resident Artist at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill (UNC-CH). Other than a few months during World War II, when he left to serve as a civilian instructor for the War Department in Florence, Italy, Ness stayed at UNC-CH for 32 years, as an associate professor and then full professor.

In 1973 the university marked his retirement with an exhibition that provided a glimpse into the personality and spirit of a beloved colleague, artist, and teacher. In the catalog, UNC alumnus Robert F. Ensslin Jr. wrote,

Beneath this rather abrasive façade, he seems to me to be a quite soft and sympathetic individual. He has a real concern for his students as people that comes through despite his best efforts to hide it. He is a tightly wound bundle of nervous energy whose chain smoking down to quarter-inch butts is one of my vivid recollections of Chapel Hill.

[Word Count, Original: 254]

[Word Count, as revised: 241]

ELISABETH PAXTON OLIVER (1871–1977)

Cardinals and Camellia, n.d.

Gouache



The cardinal is North Carolina’s state bird. The camellia, though not a native shrub, is beloved by landscapers and gardeners throughout the Southeast. Thus, this painting portrays two favorites of North Carolina’s environment, as two cardinals (one male, one female) dramatically spar above a blooming camellia. This particular painting is inscribed “To Ethel and Ernest Burwell,” a couple that lived near Elisabeth Paxton Oliver in Tryon, North Carolina. Ernest was a pioneer automobile dealer in nearby Spartanburg, South Carolina, who began selling automobiles in 1921. Ethel was active in social circles and charitable organizations.

Oliver was known for her beautifully accurate depictions of birds—reportedly made more accurate after a gentleman who had commissioned a painting brought it back to the artist with the complaint that it didn’t show the correct number of feathers. From that time on, Oliver kept a freezer of specimens to study and use in her compositions.

Many artists over the last several hundred years have depicted birds in a manner that is both beautiful and scientifically accurate. Early depictions made from dead specimens recovered from the wild often seem—with reason—lifeless. John James Audubon (1785–1851) was one of the first to show birds actively involved with the environment in which they could be found. He wired dead specimens into complex but generally naturalistic poses or worked with taxidermists to prepare the birds. Oliver likely worked in the same way to produce her lively images.

[Word Count, Original: 241]

[Word Count, as revised: 242]

HENRY CHARLES PEARSON (1914–2006)

Untitled (red circle on black), ca. 1965

Lithograph



Kinston, North Carolina, native Henry Charles Pearson was included in the Museum of Modern Art's 1965 landmark exhibition *The Responsive Eye*, which introduced the general public to “op art,” or optical art. Interestingly, Pearson never felt he quite belonged with the group, and critic Lucy Lippard seemed to agree, as she wrote about the exhibition and Pearson that

his art is romantic and even expressionist, rather than coolly and scientifically objective. Despite their meticulous character, Pearson's dizzying labyrinths of line are executed freehand, in a slightly hesitant and non-mechanical manner.

Pearson's journey as an artist began in 1931 at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill, where he studied theater design, and continued at Yale University's School of Design, where he received an MFA in theater design; thereafter, he worked as a scene painter for several theaters. In 1942 he was drafted into the US Army, using his artistic skills to letter signs, draw anatomical diagrams, and create set designs for training movies. Significantly, he was once assigned to creating topographic maps, based on Japanese Imperial survey maps, that were used to help train pilots for bombing runs over Japan. Years later, Pearson credited this immersion in Japanese culture and painting, as well as experiences while stationed in Japan after the war, with serving as an impetus for his work.

In 1953, when he returned to civilian life, Pearson settled in New York and attended the Art Students League. There, he developed as a painter focused on geometric abstraction. He turned to the style of work seen here after a personal revelation.

[Word Count, Original: 250]

[Word Count, as revised: 262]

HOBSON LAFAYETTE PITTMAN (1899–1972)

Sunlit Still Life, n.d.

Oil on Masonite



Sunlit Still Life is characteristic Hobson Pittman. In his mature work, Pittman often depicted interiors, devoid of people, with large windows and doors that looked out onto landscapes. He once said,

The furniture—color and spirit of a place—all impress me very deeply and mean more to me even than the idea of merely painting a canvas. A chair, a window, a book—all have the same living qualities of a human being.

The overall emotional quality has been described as poetic, romantic, and southern.

Although Pittman traveled widely during his adult life—with frequent visits to Europe, including one on a Guggenheim Fellowship awarded in 1955—he very often painted from memories of North Carolina. Born in the Epworth community of eastern Edgecombe County, his family moved to nearby Tarboro when he was a boy. Sadly, his father died when he was 11, and his mother, when he was 16. He then moved to live with his sister, who had married and relocated to Philadelphia.

About his teaching, Francis Wayland Speight,* a friend and colleague from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, noted,

[H]e urges [his students] to keep their individuality and seeks to help them develop in ways of their own choosing. And in helping his pupils to be true to their own ideas, Pittman has perhaps been stimulated to go forward in his painting toward the fuller expression of his own individuality.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 260]

[Word Count, as revised: 252]

(SARAH) MABEL PUGH (1891–1986)

Pearlie Sweeping, 1935

Oil on canvas



Mabel Pugh was born in Morrisville, North Carolina. After her father died when she was a year old, her mother continued to run the family store and farm. In 1900 Mabel attended Peace Institute (later Peace College and now William Peace University). The school was, at the time, one of only a few institutions in the state where women could study art at the undergraduate level. Encouraged by teacher Ruth Huntington Moore, Pugh continued her studies at the Art Students League in New York and then, awarded a scholarship in 1916, at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. There, she received an award to study in Europe.

Pugh returned to North Carolina in 1923 to care for her ailing mother, then went back to New York after her mother's death. In New York, Pugh had a successful career creating illustrations and designing covers for *McCall's*, the monthly women's magazine, and for the Doubleday publishing companies, and others. She also wrote and illustrated a children's book titled *Little Carolina Bluebonnet*. Set in North Carolina, one of the illustrations features her childhood home. Pugh also exhibited her work nationally in cities that included Philadelphia, Chicago, Houston, and Los Angeles.

When her beloved teacher at Peace Institute died in 1936, Pugh was asked to return to her home state and to head the art department, which she did until her retirement in 1960. She continued her artistic pursuits even while excelling as a teacher, her efforts gratefully recognized when, in 1940, her students dedicated the yearbook to her. Art historian Caroline Mesrobian Hickman proclaimed Mabel Pugh to be among the four most prominent North Carolina artists of the first half of the 20th century.

[Word Count, Original: 269]

[Word Count, as revised: 281]

CHARLES FRANCIS QUEST (1904–1993)

Spring Flowers, 1986

Oil on Masonite



Charles Quest studied art at Washington University's School of Fine Arts in St. Louis, Missouri. He had arrived in St. Louis from Troy, New York, as a boy, and he ended up staying there—with the exception of a brief venture to Europe—for most of his life. From 1929 until 1944, he taught in the St. Louis public schools and participated in government-sponsored programs such as the Public Works of Art Project. Quest created murals during this period; one of them, at St. Mary's Church in Helena, Arkansas, was restored in 2006.

During the 1930s, after discovering *A Woodcut Manual* by J. J. Lankes, Quest found his true passion: printmaking. His style changed, too; he adopted a decidedly more modernist approach, in sync with artists such as Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) and Fernand Léger (1881–1955). Quest's prints were collected and exhibited throughout the country, with shows at major institutions like the Library of Congress, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

By 1944 Quest was teaching at his alma mater; he remained there until his retirement in 1971. On retiring, he and his wife, Dorothy, also an artist, moved permanently to Tryon, North Carolina. He reportedly enjoyed the town's peaceful environment, as well as the artistic community he found there.

[Word Count, Original: 227]

[Word Count, as revised: 221]

LOUIS ROWELL (1870–1928)

Lake Lanier, ca. 1925

Oil on board



The town of Tryon, set amidst the North Carolina mountains, had great appeal, not only for the cultural and intellectual elite, but for others who sought respite from physical ailments. Among the latter group were the parents of Louis Rowell, who moved with their son from Maine to Tryon.

After his parents died, Rowell stayed on in Tryon. He made a living as a musician, playing at the numerous parties that were held during the town's heyday and giving lessons. The painters he met in Tryon inspired him to also learn to paint, and he taught himself by asking advice and observing academically trained artists. *Lake Lanier*, painted in his customary plein air mode, is emblematic of his style. It depicts the small man-made lake, built in 1925 just south of Tryon, with Hogback Mountain (*left*) and the Rocky Spur of Mount LeConte (*center*) in the background.

Though Prohibition was in effect during the last years of his life, Rowell often bartered his paintings for meals and drink—and he often drank to excess. He did exhibit and sell his work in Tryon, but not until 1926 was he given a major exhibition. There, in New York, he received critical acclaim and sold a number of paintings. Unfortunately, he also bought some improperly distilled alcohol from an unscrupulous bootlegger and became very ill. Back in North Carolina, he spent his last two years in and out of a psychiatric hospital, eventually dying of what was reported at the time as “exhaustion from mania.”

[Word Count, Original: 250]

[Word Count, as revised: 253]

CHAUNCEY FOSTER RYDER (1868–1949)

Little Round Top, ca. 1935

Oil on canvas



Chauncey Ryder's aspiration to become an artist kept him on the move in his early years. Born in Danbury, Connecticut, he relocated to Chicago, where he worked as an accountant by day and studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago by night. Seeking to expand his knowledge of art, Ryder and his wife, Mary, sold their home to finance his education at the Académie Julian in Paris. Following eight years in France, they settled in New York. There, he primarily painted scenes around New England, including (like Constance Cochrane*) Maine's Monhegan Island.

Ryder was also attracted to the beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains. His work *The Willow*, which was set there, was included in the art display of the 1911 Appalachian Exposition in Knoxville, Tennessee. When Paul Whitener, founder and director of the Hickory Museum of Art in North Carolina, offered Ryder a solo exhibition in 1943, the artist declined. Still, he professed, "I have a fondness for North Carolina, having spent several sketching seasons in the Blue Ridge."

The landscape feature known as Little Round Top was the scene of intense fighting during the Civil War battle at Gettysburg. Executed in impasto (paint that is thickly applied using a palette knife), Ryder's *Little Round Top* is almost an abstraction of a landscape. It demonstrates the "economy of line" and the omnipresent "Ryder green" (a yellowish, acidic green) for which the painter is known.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 239]

[Word Count, as revised: 240]

HATTIE SAUSSY (1890–1978)

Horse Cove from Sunset Mountain, Near Highlands, North Carolina, ca. 1950

Oil on board



Hattie Saussy grew up in Savannah, Georgia, and while she came from a distinguished family, life still had its challenges for her: she was blinded in one eye as a girl, and her father died when she was 14. However, art inspired her, even in her elementary school years. Beginning in the fifth grade, Saussy received regular art instruction at school. She also frequented the Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences near her home to look at Impressionist paintings.

Saussy's education continued with a year at Mary Baldwin Seminary (now Mary Baldwin College) in Staunton, Virginia, after which she moved to New York to be with her widowed mother. There, she studied at the New York School of Fine and Applied Art (now Parsons School of Design), the National Academy of Design, and the Art Students League. She also traveled in Europe, studying and visiting museums, until World War I forced her return. During the war, she worked for the government in Washington, DC, then returned to Savannah to be a full-time artist.

Throughout her life, Saussy was committed to painting and growing as an artist. While many artists of her era were a part of the Tryon art colony, her introduction to painting North Carolina's mountains came when she took summer painting classes in Burnsville, a town northeast of Asheville, with Edward S. Shorter. *Horse Cove from Sunset Mountain* was likely painted at that time (1950–1951), since it depicts a landscape near Burnsville.

[Word Count, Original: 258]

[Word Count, as revised: 245]

ALICE RAVENEL HUGER SMITH (1876–1958)

On the French Broad, n.d.

Watercolor



Alice Ravenel Huger Smith was born in Charleston, South Carolina, during Reconstruction. But postwar Charleston was just a shell of its former grandeur and beauty, and once-prominent families, like Smith's, were poor and struggling. Opportunities to study art during such a time of physical want were few. But Smith did what she could to teach herself and find inspiration around her—taking classes at the Carolina Art Association, learning from artists like Birge Harrison (a Tonalist painter who stayed in Charleston for a time), and studying Japanese color woodblock prints of the ukiyo-e school.

Smith set her sights on using her art to help inspire the rebuilding of Charleston. She made illustrations for several books on the city's history and architecture, including 60 line drawings for *The Dwelling Houses of Charleston, South Carolina* (1917). Her efforts, along with others, ushered in the Charleston Renaissance, a movement that brought historic preservation and contemporary revitalization to the city.

Smith's best-known works were her refined watercolors of the landscape around her. Viewed through a lens of nostalgia, she was a painter of idylls. "She portrayed the moods created by changing water and light. Her atmospheres had an air of mystery. Hers were works of poetic realism," said art historian Martha Severns. Smith's watercolors were exhibited widely in her lifetime, although she, herself, seldom left Charleston. *On the French Broad*, which depicts the river that flows through Asheville, is evidence of a rare occasion when she visited western North Carolina.

[Word Count, Original: 250]

[Word Count, as revised: 246]

FRANCIS WAYLAND SPEIGHT (1896–1989)

Factories Near Manayunk, Pennsylvania, 1927

Oil on canvas



Francis Speight was born on his family's farm in Bertie County, North Carolina. After high school, he studied briefly at Wake Forest College (then in a community north of Raleigh), but when World War I broke out, at the behest of his brother, he went back to the family farm to help his parents. After the war, he traveled to Washington, DC, to study at the Corcoran School of Art. Through the encouragement of his sister Tulie, who had attended the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, he went there, studied for 5 years, taught for 33, and even met his wife, Sarah Blakeslee.*

For a time the couple lived in the Roxborough-Manayunk section of Philadelphia, in the Schuylkill River valley, and the area became the primary source for Speight's landscape paintings throughout his career. Speight explained,

I have been fascinated by the height and depth of the landscape. . . . In Manayunk, it was always stimulating to stand and look across the valley and paint the rich mosaics of houses on the distant hill, the river, and foreground sloping toward the river or turn and look up at the houses and trees, so often seen against the blue sky and white clouds.

In 1961 Blakeslee and Speight moved south, and Speight served as a professor and artist-in-residence at East Carolina College (now East Carolina University) until he retired in 1976. Speight achieved national recognition as a painter, and his works are held in numerous collections.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 255]

[Word Count, as revised: 247]

WILLIAM ROBERT STEENE (1887–1965)

Portrait of Eula, n.d.

Oil on Masonite



Portrait of Eula depicts Eula Jackson, William Steene's wife. They met in New York following his studies at the Art Students League and the National Academy of Design. At the time, Steene was painting murals and theater scenery and she was an actress, hailing from Lexington, Kentucky. After they married in 1914, they spent years in North Carolina, living in Asheville, Raleigh, and Chapel Hill.

From the 1920s until the late 1940s, the couple also lived in Tryon, North Carolina, where they socialized with a cosmopolitan group of entrepreneurs, artists, writers, and intellectual and political leaders. Steene visited with many of the artists represented in the Alcott Collection, including George Charles Aid* and Lawrence Mazzanovich,* and he was known to enjoy golf (in fact, the couple's home in Tryon bordered a golf course). Steene also golfed at the Homestead in Hot Springs, Virginia, where his young caddy reputedly was Sam Sneed, later a champion golfer. Ready access to important people of the day led to Steene's becoming a successful portrait painter. Among his subjects were presidents of Duke University, the University of North Carolina, and Wofford College.

Steene and his wife spent their later years in Gulf Hills, Louisiana. He continued to paint portraits and murals there, including a 50-foot-long mural for the Louisiana Sesquicentennial Celebration that featured President Dwight D. Eisenhower. It hangs in the Louisiana State Museum in New Orleans.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 231]

[Word Count, as revised: 234]

WILL HENRY STEVENS (1881–1949)

Untitled No. ? (North Carolina mountain landscape), 1937

Pastel, gouache, and ink on paper



Will Henry Stevens was considered a pioneer of modernism in the American South, known for melding philosophical and artistic influences into a unique style that was simultaneously abstract and representational and, also, for working and experimenting in abstraction without abandoning the practice of painting and drawing directly from nature. He began annual pilgrimages to Asheville, North Carolina, in 1916, trips that he continued even during his tenure from 1921 to 1948 as a professor at Newcomb College (now Tulane University) in New Orleans.

Stevens developed part of his love of the poetic and spiritual qualities of nature from reading the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau during his youth in southern Indiana. He was also inspired by the ideas of Petyr Oupensky (1878–1947), a Russian theosophist; theosophy combines elements of Western occult traditions, 19th-century American spiritualism, and Eastern religious ideas to promote and enact universal harmony through the primacy of nature.

From Song dynasty (960–1279) landscape paintings found in the Freer Galleries in Washington, DC, Stevens gained an understanding of conveying the experience of place through compositional devices; in particular, he learned isometric perspective, a manner of representing three-dimensional space in which parallel lines remain parallel rather than converging as they recede (which they do in traditional Western linear perspective). He also employed the playful lyricism in shape, line, and color that he discovered in the works of Paul Klee (1879–1940) and Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944) in the Guggenheim collection during the 1930s.

[Word Count, Original: 245]

[Word Count, as revised: 247]

HARRY A. STONER (1880–1960)

My Favorite Village: Swansboro, NC, 1948

Woodblock print



Born in Springfield, Ohio, Harry Stoner studied art in London, Paris, and Amsterdam. He was a talented polymath of an artist who excelled as a portrait painter, illustrator, designer, architect, and muralist. His design for Tiffany Studio's enormous glass mosaic curtain (1911) at the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City has been celebrated as masterful.

While it is not known why or on what occasion Stoner visited North Carolina, the title of this woodblock print indicates that the coastal town of Swansboro must have been a place he frequented and enjoyed.

Anyone familiar with the town could immediately place the image: *My Favorite Village* depicts Front Street looking southwest toward Church Street, with White Oak River just behind the buildings. The three buildings on the left were, at the time, the Dorothy Saunders Café, Mattocks House, and Codfish Ball. Yana's Restaurant, a local favorite, is just beyond the last building. The buildings on the right are the former Captain Charlie's Restaurant, and stores—Harry Moore, Russell's, and the Old Brick (ca. 1839). Just beyond the Old Brick store is Main Street. The driver of the buggy with the mule was a woman named Mrs. Huffman.

[Word Count, Original: 193]

[Word Count, as revised: 196]

PRENTISS TAYLOR (1907–1991)

Atlantic, North Carolina; Cleaning Fish, n.d.

Ink on paper



Like many artists in the Alcott Collection, Prentiss Taylor attended sessions at the Art Students League in New York. Studying lithography there in 1931, he learned techniques he would later use to become a nationally recognized master printmaker. He once recalled, “With the first magic feeling of the crayon on the fine grain of the stone, I knew I was at home in lithography.”

While this work is not a print, it does represent Taylor’s signature style and also implies, as it illustrates the lives of working people, his dedication to social concerns. This dedication also led him to collaborate with noted poet Langston Hughes. Together, they created Golden Stair Press and published *The Negro Mother and Other Dramatic Recitations* and *Scottsboro Limited*. In doing so, Taylor became one of the few white artists to participate in the Harlem Renaissance. He most likely visited North Carolina during his many travels between New York, Washington, DC, and Charleston, South Carolina, where he spent a great deal of time.

Taylor was president of the Society of Washington Printmakers for 34 years and an associate of the National Academy of Design. His works were exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and elsewhere throughout the country. In addition to working as a printmaker, Taylor served as an art therapist for St. Elizabeth’s Hospital, a psychiatric hospital in Washington.

[Word Count, Original: 246]

[Word Count, as revised: 242]

ANNE WALL THOMAS (b. 1928)

Convergence, 2009

Gouache



Anne Wall is a native of Lilesville, North Carolina, a small town east of Charlotte. She left her rural birthplace to study art at the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina (now UNC–Greensboro) with Gregory Ivy.* There, she received her BFA and in 1951 an MFA.

Early in her career, Anne taught art in public schools. In 1954 she was honored with a Ford Foundation Fellowship for High School Teachers, which she used to travel and study in California. Over the years she served as art supervisor in the public schools in Oxford, North Carolina, and taught art in the Charlotte public schools. From 1959 to 1962, she was an instructor of art education at the University of Georgia. While there, she married fellow artist Howard Wilber Thomas.*

Anne's painting is rooted in several early-20th-century avant-garde art movements, including analytic Cubism, practiced by Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) and Georges Braque (1882–1963); Russian Constructivism, practiced by Kazimir Malevich (1878–1935); and de Stijl, practiced by Piet Mondrian (1872–1944). The common denominator for all—and the appeal for Anne Thomas—is the importance of formal balance in the artistic elements, such as color, shape, and line, and the intrinsic non-objective beauty of architectonic forms.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 228]

[Word Count, as revised: 219]

HOWARD WILBER THOMAS (1891–1971)

Enveloping White, 1962

Polymer, graphite, and paper



Howard Thomas spent his youth and early career in the Midwest. In Ohio, where he was born, he attended Ohio State University. Then he studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Following his student years, he taught art at a Milwaukee high school until he became director of the Division of Art Education at the Milwaukee State Teachers College (now University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee). During the Great Depression, he served as an art administrator for the Public Works of Art Project and the WPA Milwaukee Handicraft Project.

His connection with North Carolina began in 1941, when he traveled south for a speaking engagement. Intrigued by the color of Asheville’s red clay, he began experimenting with the soil as a pigment for his paints—a practice he later continued with North Carolina artist Anne Wall,* whom he married after the death of his first wife. In 1942 Howard served as acting director of the art department at the Woman’s College of the University of North Carolina (now UNC–Greensboro). He eventually served in the art department of Agnes Scott College and finally as an art professor at the University of Georgia. From there, he retired with his new wife to Carrboro, North Carolina.

Howard’s early works focused on picturesque landscapes, but he developed a more abstract style during his years at the University of Georgia. Though his more recent work was essentially a rhythmic ensemble of colors and shapes, he continued to be inspired by nature, and he carried his sketchbook constantly to record what he saw in the natural world.

*This artist is represented elsewhere in the gallery.

[Word Count, Original: 271]

[Word Count, as revised: 263]

EUGENE HEALAN THOMASON (1895–1972)

Hankins Pig Pen, 1966

Oil on plywood



Eugene Healan Thomason grew up in Charlotte, North Carolina. While he hoped to become an artist, his father insisted that he attend Davidson College. After a year at Davidson, however, Thomason dropped out and joined the US Navy.

When he returned to Charlotte, Thomason painted a portrait of his father's employer, James B. Duke, who, subsequently, took interest in Eugene's artistic abilities and provided financial support for his studies in New York. At the Art Students League, Thomason studied with renowned artists John Sloan (1871–1951) and George Bellows (1882–1925). He also became lifelong friends with George Luks (1867–1933), with whom he shared a studio for several years. These artists, like Thomason, were intent on depicting gritty scenes of the city's underbelly. Their unvarnished look at life was dubbed the Ashcan School.

Thomason continued to embrace the "ashcan" aesthetic even after returning to North Carolina in the 1930s, hence earning the moniker, "Ashcan Artist of Appalachia." *Hankins Pig Pen* is from his most celebrated body of work, which chronicled the experiences of a fictitious western North Carolina family. His intent was to convey through his down-to-earth character studies an authentic, dignified interpretation of farm life. On the reverse of this painting, he wrote, "To Mac and Virginia, painted by Eugene Thomason, Nebo, 1966." Likely, the inscription is for his stepdaughter, Virginia McMahan, and her husband. Nebo, a small town in the Lake James region of the Appalachian foothills, is where Thomason and his wife, Lib, lived from the time of their marriage in 1939 until his death in 1972.

[Word Count, Original: 265]

[Word Count, as revised: 261]

WALTER WHITCOMB THOMPSON (1882–1948)

Five 'Till Nine, ca. 1947

Oil on plywood



In addition to being nationally known for his marine and landscape paintings, Walter Thompson is remembered for his devotion to teaching. After moving to South Carolina in 1934, he operated several art schools in the state and taught in the Beaufort and Hartsville public schools and at Coker College. *Five 'Till Nine* [sic] shows African American children walking purposefully to school. Their diligence, earnestness, and dedication are further illustrated by the title's indication that they are hurrying to school to be there on time—a reflection of Thompson's high expectations for all his students and his belief in the importance of education.

From 1934 to 1937, Thompson conducted several outdoor painting schools. One of them, held on a plantation near White Hall, South Carolina, was called the Combahee River Art Colony. In 1935 the school was moved to Beaufort with year-round instruction, though the summer session was held in western North Carolina in August.

When Thompson died in 1948, his obituary recalled him

not only for his canvases, but for the students he inspired with high standards of workmanship. In a world which many modern painters have found chaotic and terrible he saw always beauty, the beauty of trees, of clouds, of slow-moving rivers, of the never-resting sea, of great music, and above all, the beauty of light, which he painted so vividly.

[Word Count, Original: 240]

[Word Count, as revised: 222]

WALTER WHITCOMB THOMPSON (1882–1948)

Mom-Caroline's Kingdom, n.d.

Oil on plywood



Walter Thompson was born in Palatka, Florida. He studied at the University of Florida and the New School of Design in Boston. Among his favorite painters were John Constable (1776–1837) and John Singer Sargent (1856–1925), whose focus on color and the atmospheric play of light enchanted him. In his early career, Thompson mainly depicted landscapes in a Postimpressionist style.

After moving to Beaufort, South Carolina, in 1934, he combined his love of nature and light with scenes of the people he encountered there. *Mom-Caroline's Kingdom* depicts an African American woman washing laundry outdoors. The stippled application of paint and a focus on the dappling of light convey a romantic and nostalgic view of the woman's domestic chores rather than the harsh conditions— heating water in a large pot over an open fire and scrubbing and wringing the laundry by hand—she likely faced on a daily basis. Once, during a 1935 radio broadcast, Thompson explained the attentiveness to light in his work:

There is beauty in nature, rich, vibrant, soul-stirring color, sometimes seen at dawn, or amid the brilliant lights and shadows of mid-day, or the soft, lingering peace of even-tide, that makes one long to retain it, permanently.

Thompson often traveled to North Carolina, so it is unclear whether this scene was painted in North or South Carolina.

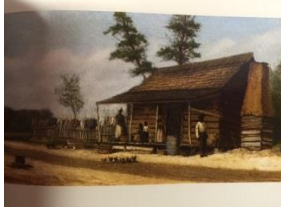
[Word Count, Original: 230]

[Word Count, as revised: 221]

WILLIAM AIKEN WALKER (1838–1921)

Untitled, n.d.

Oil on board



An unquenchable entrepreneurial and peripatetic spirit governed William Aiken Walker's career as a largely self-taught artist. Even as a youth in Charleston, South Carolina, Walker painted *nature morte* images of game he'd shot, and at age 12 he exhibited them at the first South Carolina Institute Fair. During the Civil War, he served as a cartographer in the Confederate Engineer Corps. After the war, he lived in Baltimore but traveled throughout the South during the winter. He later moved to New Orleans, which he considered his second home, and summered in the mountains of North Carolina.

Walker is known for his genre scenes of rural African American life. His painting here depicts a typical North Carolina slave cabin, with its hand-cut cedar shake roof, rough poles holding up the porch, and distinctively shaped fireplace and chimney. The inhabitants attend to chores as laundry dries on the fence.

Scenes like this one were nostalgic fictions, mass-produced by Walker. As for his method, he generally took a large piece of canvas and first painted a blue sky. Then he would add earth tones in the foreground and fields in the mid-ground. The canvas would then be cut into smaller pieces to which he could add images of people or workers, such as cotton pickers. He was known to set up an easel in the French Quarter of New Orleans and sell paintings produced in this way to tourists for prices ranging from 50¢ to \$3. In 1884 Currier and Ives furthered his popularity by reproducing two of his large paintings as chromolithographs.

[Word Count, Original: 252]

[Word Count, as revised: 259]

AMELIA MONTAGUE WATSON (1856–1934)

In the Foothills, n.d.

Watercolor



Amelia Watson grew up in East Windsor Hill, Connecticut, where visitors to her family home often included Harriet Beecher Stowe and Mark Twain. She studied with family friend Dwight William Tryon (1849–1925), a Tonalist and Impressionist painter who taught at Smith College for 37 years. Tryon encouraged her to be a serious artist despite the period expectation that she forsake a career to marry and have a family. Ultimately, in 1878 Watson joined the faculty of Temple Grove Seminary in Saratoga Springs, New York. During the summers, she relocated to the Martha's Vineyard Summer Institute, where she taught and headed the art department for more than 20 years.

Watson is best known for her watercolors. One of her most important patrons was actor and playwright William Gillette (famous at the time for his portrayal of Sherlock Holmes). Gillette and his wife wintered in Tryon, North Carolina, and invited Watson and friend Margaret Warner Morley to visit in the late 1880s. Captivated by the place, Watson built a home and studio, where she lived part of each year for 40 years. Inspired by the mountain surroundings, she painted *In the Foothills* in Tryon; she also created several illustrations for Morley's 1913 book *The Carolina Mountains*.

The most famous of Watson's watercolors were perhaps illustrations for Henry David Thoreau's *Cape Cod*. While reading a copy of the book she borrowed from Morley, Watson painted illustrations in the margins. Friends who saw the small watercolors brought them to the attention of Houghton, Mifflin and Company, which republished Thoreau's text with Watson's illustrations in 1896.

[Word Count, Original: 253]

[Word Count, as revised: 263]