The Creator & The Muse | Megan Elizabeth Read | Portrait of Dr. Elaine Melotti Schmidt | *Elaine and "The Artist"*, 2020 | Oil on Linen | 84 × 60 in | 33 Contemporary, Chicago

FINE ART CONNOISSEUR

The Coeur d'Alene Art Auction

Fine Western & American Art

1

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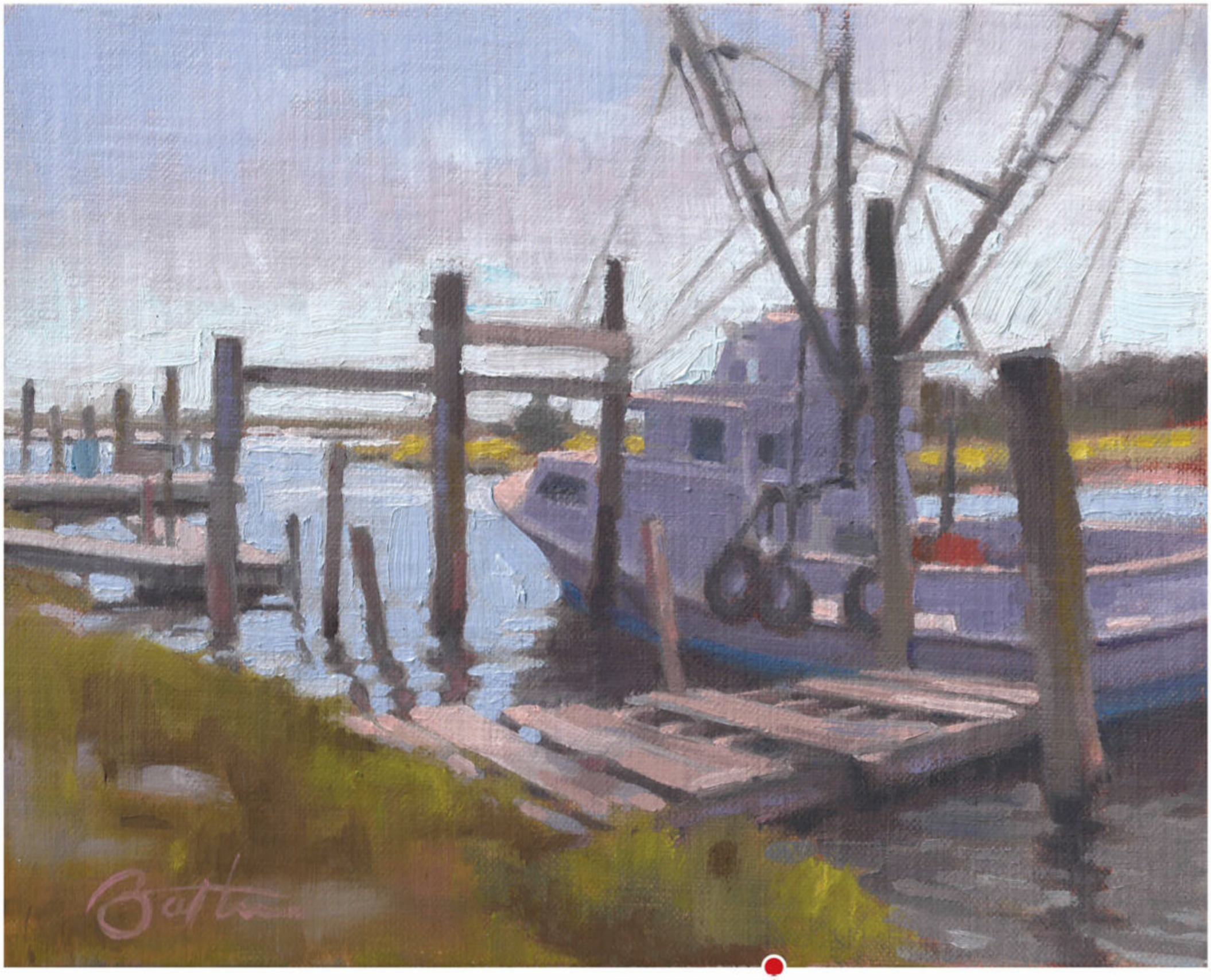
1. Henry Farny (1847–1916), *Nomads* (1902), oil on canvas, 22×40 inches, Estimate: $1,500,000-2,500,000 **2.** Carl Rungius (1869–1959), *Herd Bull*, oil on canvas, 24×32 inches, Estimate: $200,000-300,000 **3.** Victor Higgins (1884–

FINE ART CONNOISSEUR

George Romney (1734–1802), *Study of a Gentleman*, n.d., pencil and ink wash on paper, 16 1/2 x 11 in., private collection

At the earnest desire of Mrs. T—, I once more sat for my picture. Mr. Romney is a painter indeed. He struck off an exact likeness at once; and did more in one hour than Sir Joshua [Reynolds] did in ten.
—John Wesley (1703–1791, a founder of Methodism), January 5, 1789



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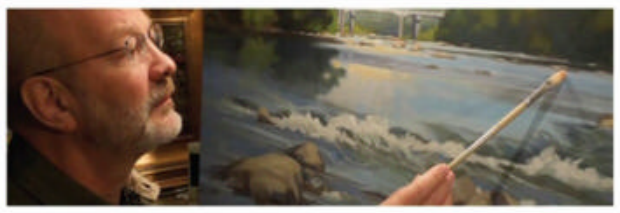

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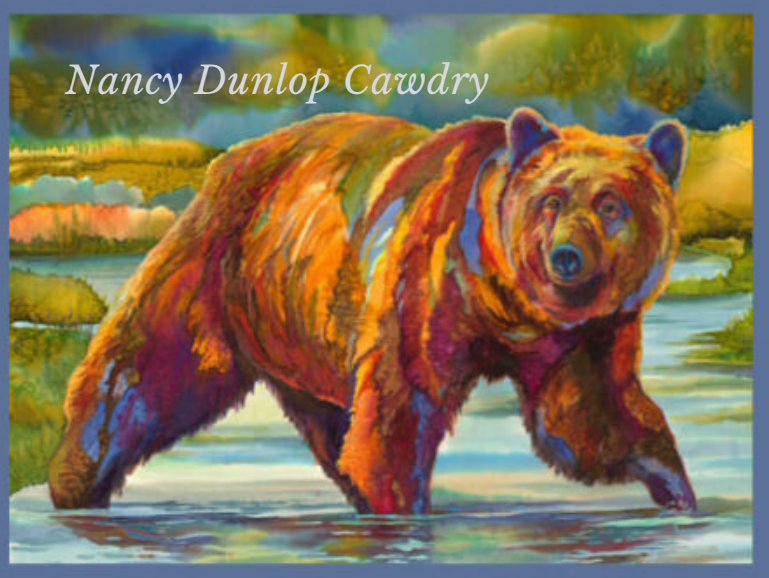
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JUNE 2020 • VOLUME 17, ISSUE 3

ON THE COVER

SEAN CHEETHAM (b. 1977), *Boss of the Plains* (detail), 2016, oil on paper, 21 x 15 in. (overall), private collection. For details, please see page 46.

Fine Art Connoisseur is also available in a digital edition. Please visit fineartconnoisseur.com for details.

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The House of Lords
Great Blue Heron Pair
Bronze
70″H
x 50″L
x 29″D

VICTORIA CURRENS

No Worries, 18h x 23w, pastel on UART Sanded Premium Pastel paper

This pastel piece, entitled *No Worries*, was selected for the Fine Art Connoisseur Award of Excellence from Scottsdale Artists' School's Best and Brightest 2020 Juried Fine Art Show. This work and others can be found on my website.

vcurrensart.com

Marina Marina | Aydemir Saidov

Marina, “Allure,” Oil on Canvas, 18 x 40”

Saidov, “Repose,” Oil on Canvas, 24 x 24”

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WHAT GOOD CAN COME OF THIS?

Painted by **DANIEL E. GREENE (1934–2020)**
Publisher B. Eric Rhoads
2005, oil on canvas, 30 x 24 in.
Gifts in memory of Daniel E. Greene can be made at artistsfellowship.org, which assists artists in moments of crisis like the one now underway.

I have been counting my blessings, aware that being cooped up with a wooded backyard and a neighbor with 40 acres is a small price to pay to keep from infecting someone, or being infected.

My fear, my concern for others, and my sadness in watching Facebook friends post tragic news of family members who are ill, or worse, have made me want to default to depression. But I refuse to give in. None of us ever wanted this, but I'm embracing it for what it is.

I don't think life will ever be the same. Yes, we will return to a new normal, but we have each grown from this experience and taken hold of something that has enriched our lives. We are discovering things about ourselves we did not know. Those with businesses, myself included, are finding new ways to do business, and that will continue after the all-clear.

This experience has strengthened my own marriage; it has given my wife, Laurie, and I more time together; and now we have our teenage triplets at home, playing and doing projects they had no time for before. They've been forced to be creative, to grow. Their last few months of high school would have found them spending no time at home, so now we're getting the gift of time with them. Deep, rich time.

I'm so impressed with human ingenuity, watching friends whose imaginations are on fire to develop solutions to help others, to expose their enterprises, to survive. These innovations will make them stronger in the long run.

I'm also impressed with how we are coming together as a people. We share this fear, this problem, this quarantine, with the entire world. Because of some of the initiatives I've been forced to come up with, I'm meeting and chatting with people around the globe. They are helping me, and I am helping them. I realized after talking with a new acquaintance, an artist in Iran, that his issues and concerns are the same as mine. We're connected by our passion for art.

Let's change what we can change in the next 15 minutes. Don't ruminate about six months or one year from now. Find something to look forward to, to get you excited, something you can learn at home, a project you can take on.

In a weird way, this is a golden hour. It will come to an end. Maybe soon, maybe not, but it will end. After that, you'll be busier than ever. Take advantage of this time. And Godspeed.

The world lost a great artist this April when Daniel E. Greene passed. Now I am even more grateful that he and his artist wife, Wende Caporale, launched our *Figurative Art & Convention Expo* (FACE) last November with such eloquent presentations after receiving their Lifetime Achievement Awards. Dan Greene will be missed very much, and we look forward to remembering him with a moment of silence during the next FACE in Baltimore this October.

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P.S.: My team and I have been working around the clock to come up with new ideas that help artists and art lovers cope with this challenging moment. To name just one example, here's how my art stimulus package works: Artists and galleries post links to their paintings or websites on their social media and tag it with #buyartnow. People who want to buy art to help them survive put #buyartnow into the search on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, or Twitter and browse what others have posted.

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Tucker Smith (American, b. 1940), *Moose Falls, Yellowstone National Park,* 2014. Oil on canvas. 32 × 40 inches.
Purchased with additional funding generously provided by the Friends of Joan and Tucker Smith. National Museum of Wildlife Art. © Tucker Smith

PLEASANT REMINDERS

A few weeks ago, I was happily reminded of two special places we visited last October during *Fine Art Connoisseur*'s tour of Provence and the French Riviera.

I was glad to learn that *Van Gogh and the Olive Groves* is being organized by the Dallas Museum of Art and Amsterdam's Van Gogh Museum. This will be the first exhibition dedicated to the series of 15 paintings of olive trees that Vincent Van Gogh created in 1889 while he was a patient at the asylum in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence. Our jolly group of art lovers visited that still-functioning facility, Saint-Paul de Mausole (saintpauldemausole.fr), and we found it quite touching to see where this troubled genius sought refuge after an especially severe psychotic episode. We were especially moved to walk through the lush olive grove that still grows nearby. The dark, writhing limbs of olive trees are always fascinating to admire, but seeing these particular ones shed new light on Van Gogh's famous pictures, which possess their own writhing energy.

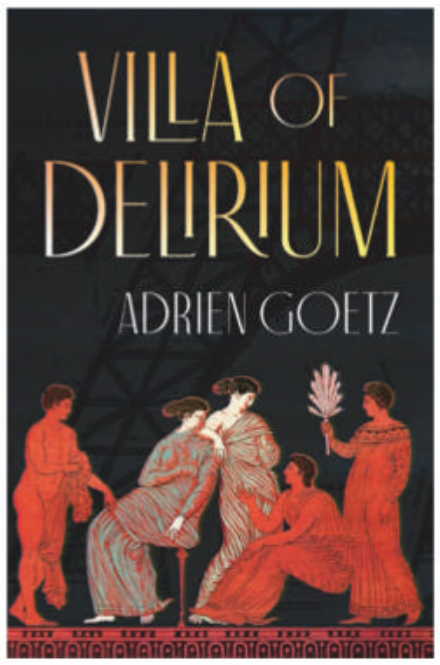
To open in Amsterdam in June 2021, then in Dallas that October, the new exhibition will reunite Vincent's 15 paintings for the first time while highlighting the new discoveries about techniques and materials that have emerged during this project's multi-year collaborative research phase. I look forward to seeing it next year.

I was further delighted to learn that, this May, New Vessel Press (newvesselpress.com) will publish the novel *Villa of Delirium*, written by Adrien Goetz, who teaches art history at the Sorbonne in Paris. The house in the book's title is the unforgettable Villa Kérylos (villakerylos.fr), which our *Fine Art Connoisseur* group visited last October in Beaulieu sur Mer, a chic seaside enclave east of Nice on the French Riviera.

Designed and constructed by the wealthy Parisian archeologist Théodore Salomon von Reinach, this fabulous summer retreat replicates an ancient Greek palace, but with all the modern conveniences money could buy in the early 1900s.

The Villa Kérylos at Beaulieu sur Mer

Olive trees near the asylum at Saint-Rémy-de-Provence where Vincent Van Gogh stayed; photo: Elaine Gaskell deSpoelberch



The novel's narrator calls the house "an act of delirium; above all, an optimistic act, proof that one could reset time as one could reset a clock and resist the outside world." That imagined narrator is the son of a servant from a nearby mansion; adopted by the Reinachs, he survives the Nazis' confiscation of the villa and murder of several Reinach grandchildren. Goetz's 320-page book has been translated from the French by Natasha Lehrer and will intrigue even those who have not yet visited the Villa Kérylos.

I remain grateful for the memorable adventures offered during *Fine Art Connoisseur*'s 10 previous trips to Europe, and now I am looking forward to September 2020, when we will explore Vienna, Berlin, and Dresden.

For details, please visit finearttrip.com/2020.

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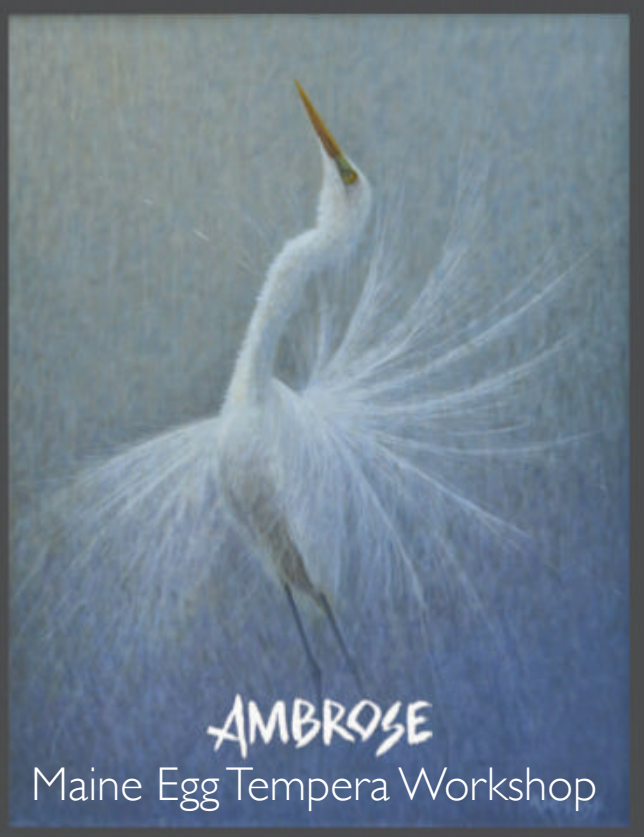

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WRITTEN BY DAVID MASELLO

CONVERSATION TOPIC

FAVORITE

KT SULLIVAN
Cabaret performer and artistic director, Mabel Mercer Foundation
Photo: Stacy Sullivan

Some Little Talk of Me and Thee There Was
HARRY WILLSON WATROUS (1857–1940)
c. 1905–09, oil on canvas, 27 x 42 in.
Permanent Collection of The National Arts Club, New York City

KT Sullivan describes her favorite work of art by singing. She is, after all, the woman many consider the "Grande Dame of American Cabaret," as well as artistic director of the Mabel Mercer Foundation, a nonprofit that honors and promotes the legacy of its namesake cabaret star. When Sullivan begins to assess a painting by Harry Willson Watrous that hangs opposite the bar at New York City's National Arts Club, she intones the lyrics to a song, *Old Friends*, by Nancy Ford and Gretchen Cryer.

"I look at the two women in the painting and it reminds me of that song," says Sullivan, whereupon she hits the notes perfectly, singing, "Every time I've lost another lover/I call up my old friend/ And I say let's get together/I'm under the weather/Another love has come to an end." While the conversation the two women in the painting are having, circa 1905–09, remains a mystery, Sullivan surmises that the topic is love. "I feel there are secrets being told," she confides, echoing the painting's title, *Some Little Talk of Me and Thee There Was*. "The blond woman is a good listener, as if she's heard her friend discuss this subject before. As the song goes about lost love, the blonde might be thinking of her friend, 'the pain of getting through it/... You'll do it again.'"

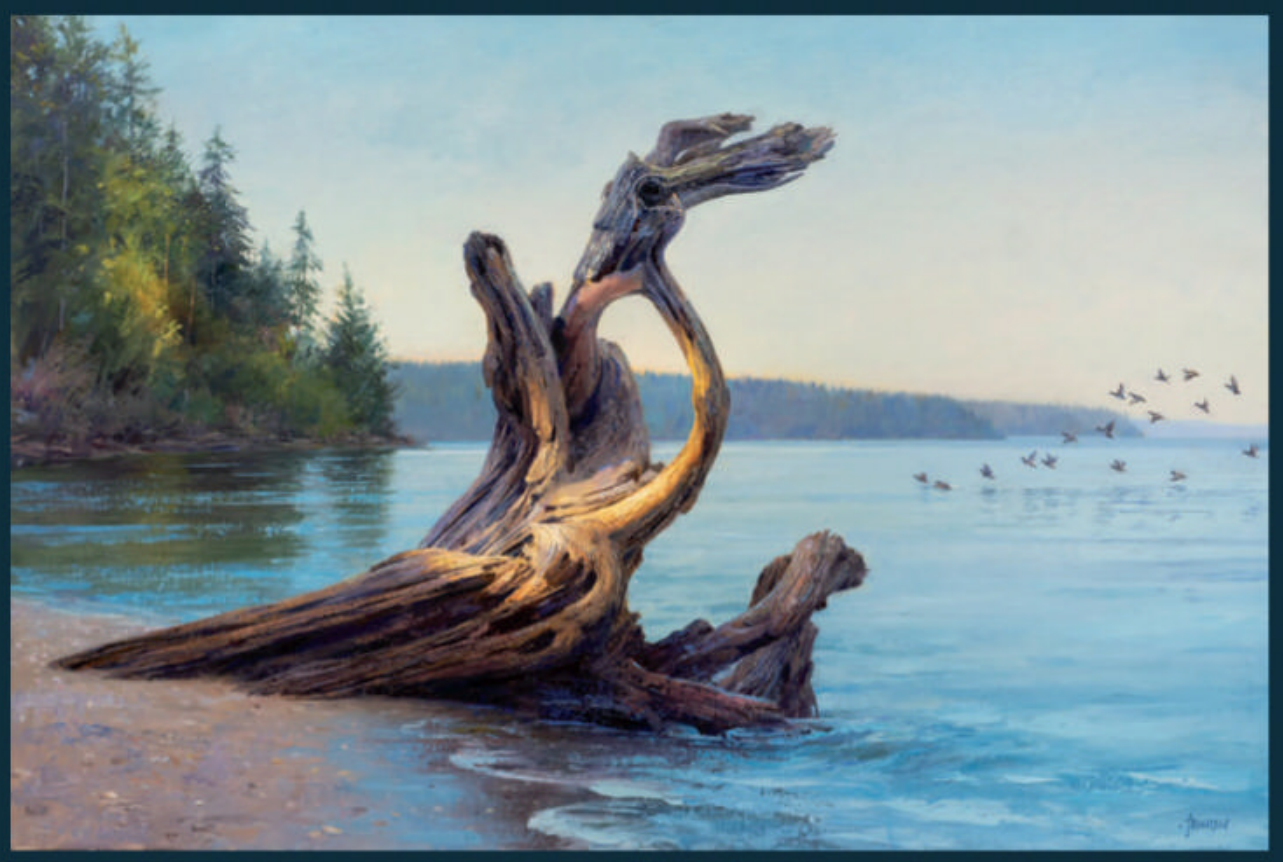
Watrous, an American painter who trained in France, was known for his meticulous depictions of stylized — and stylish — women. For Sullivan's sold-out performances at glamorous venues in New York, on cruise ships, and elsewhere, fashion is a big part of the act — another reason she's so attracted to this image. She cites the rakish hats the women wear, their shoes, the pinched waistlines of their tailored frocks. "They represent that transition from Victorian to Modern times. There's power in this work. There's a sense of liberation: they're both on the cusp of getting the vote. They'll have to wait 15 years, but the Suffragist movement is well underway."

So attuned to fashion and sartorial nuance is Sullivan that she is fascinated, too, by the snippets of paintings that hang on the wall behind the women. On the paneled wall of what might be a clubhouse, perhaps an equestrian one, three paintings show cropped images of people's feet and legs. Sullivan suggests that the slightly raised heels of the woman at far left indicate she is kissing a tall man. "Her hem is above the ankles, too, which was kind of scandalous then." Sullivan adds that the woman in Dutch-style clogs must be moving or dancing since her skirt is flowing, while the figure with the jockey and horse is dressed in what appears to be fashionable stirrup pants or leggings.

To further prove her fascination with clothing, Sullivan opens the closets of her Manhattan apartment to reveal a variety of dressy shoes that might rival in number those of Imelda Marcos's infamous collection — though Sullivan uses hers to greater effect. "I always wear high heels on stage, but I don't feel the pain of them until I take them off."

As a longtime honorary member of the National Arts Club, Sullivan often examines the Watrous painting near its bar, an appropriate spot given that the two women in the painting appear to be drinking lemonades. She continues to wonder about their conversation, and cannot resist singing a few more thoughts from *Old Friends*: "Yes, we sit in a bar and talk 'till two/About life and love as old friends do."

JAMES E. TENNISON



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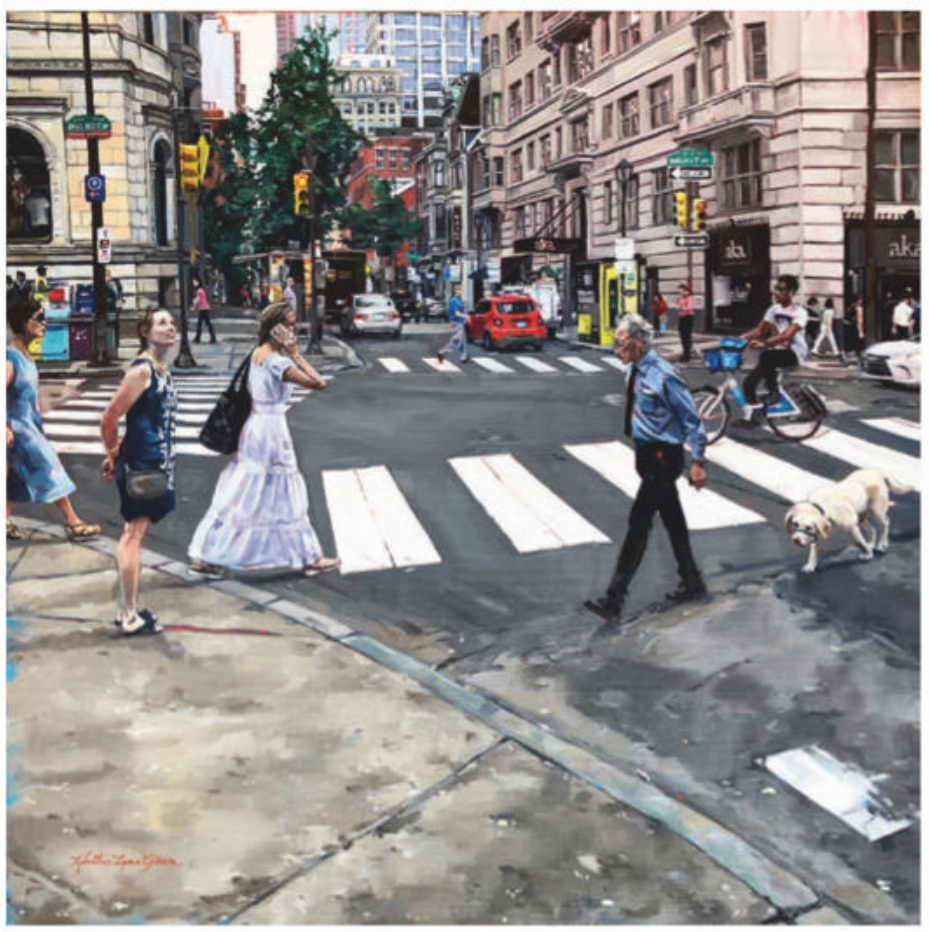

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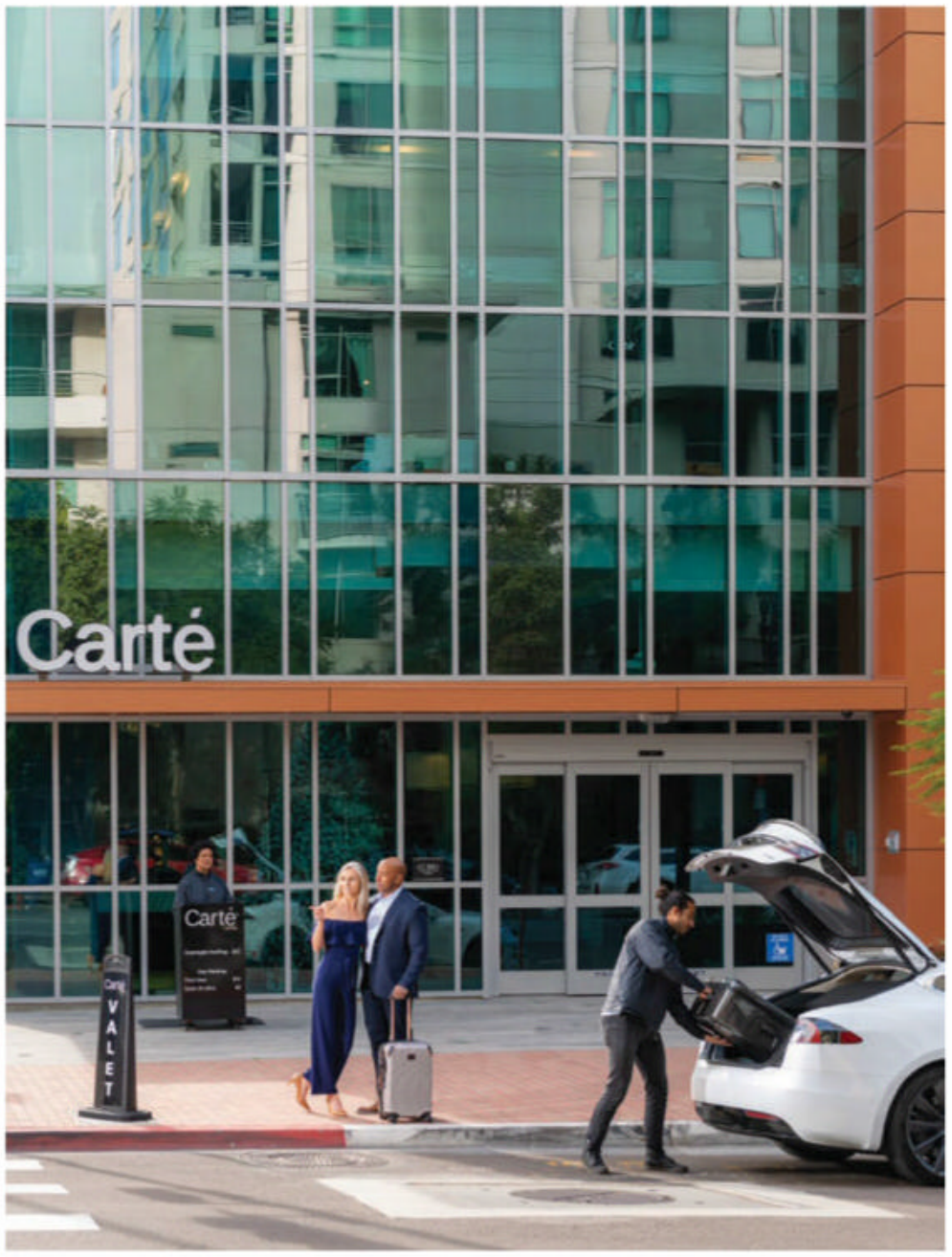

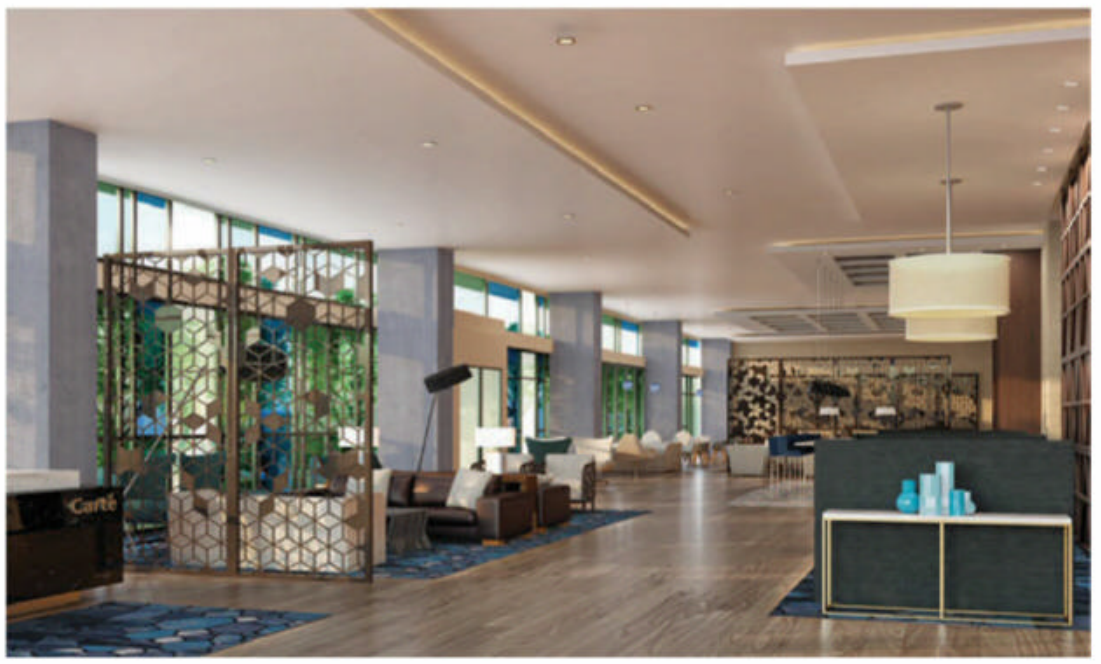

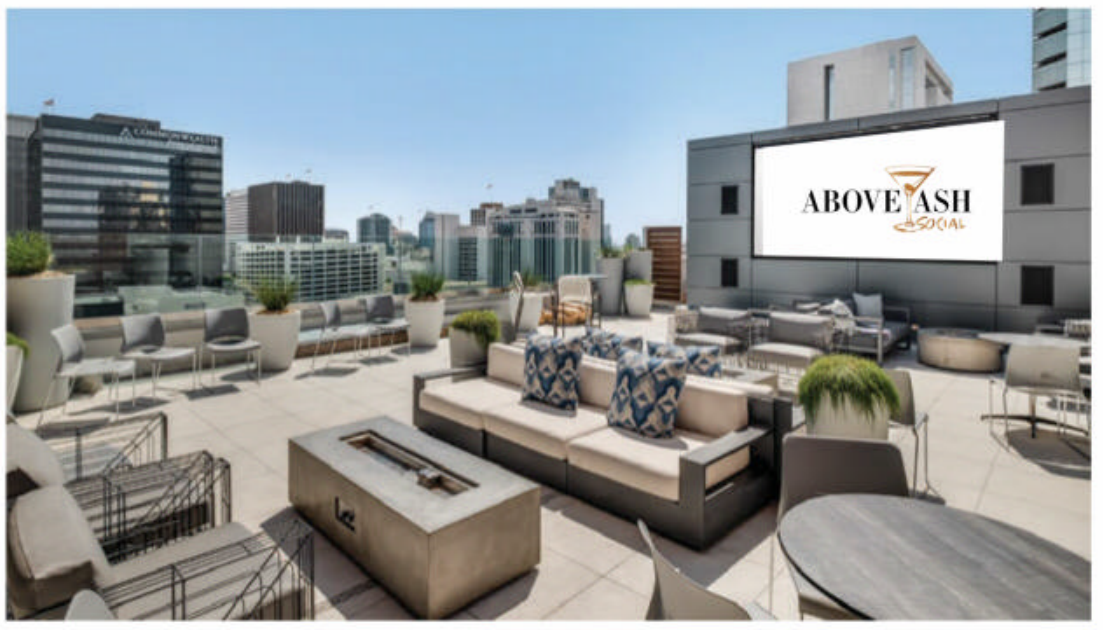

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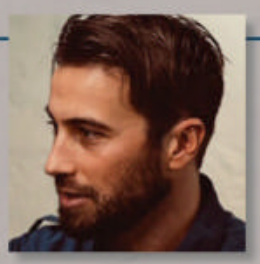
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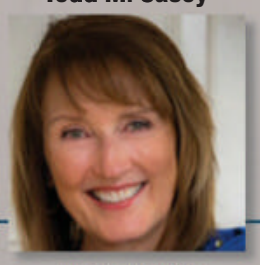
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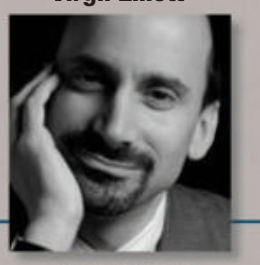
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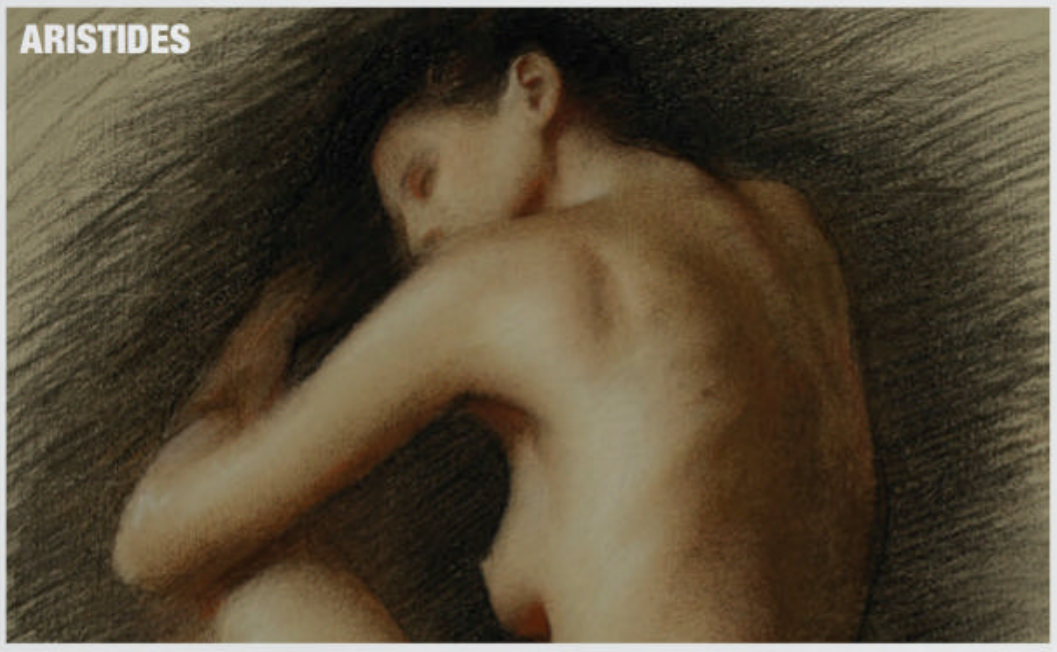

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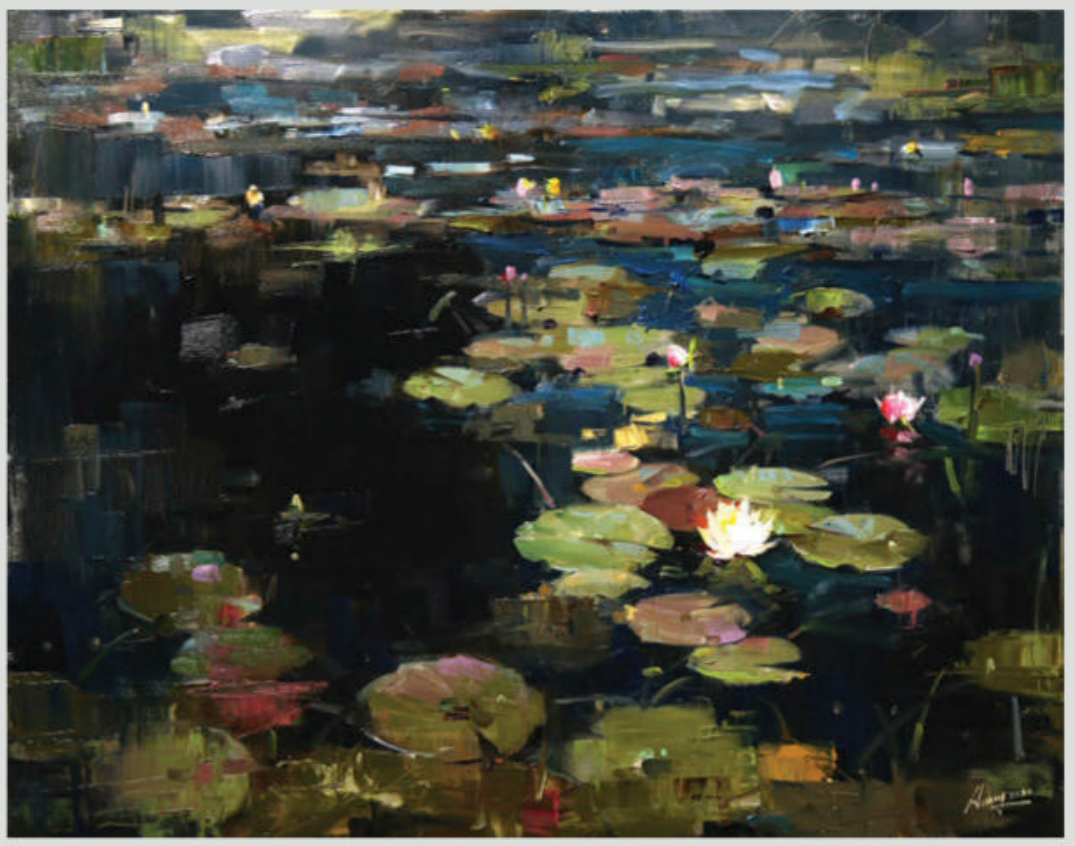

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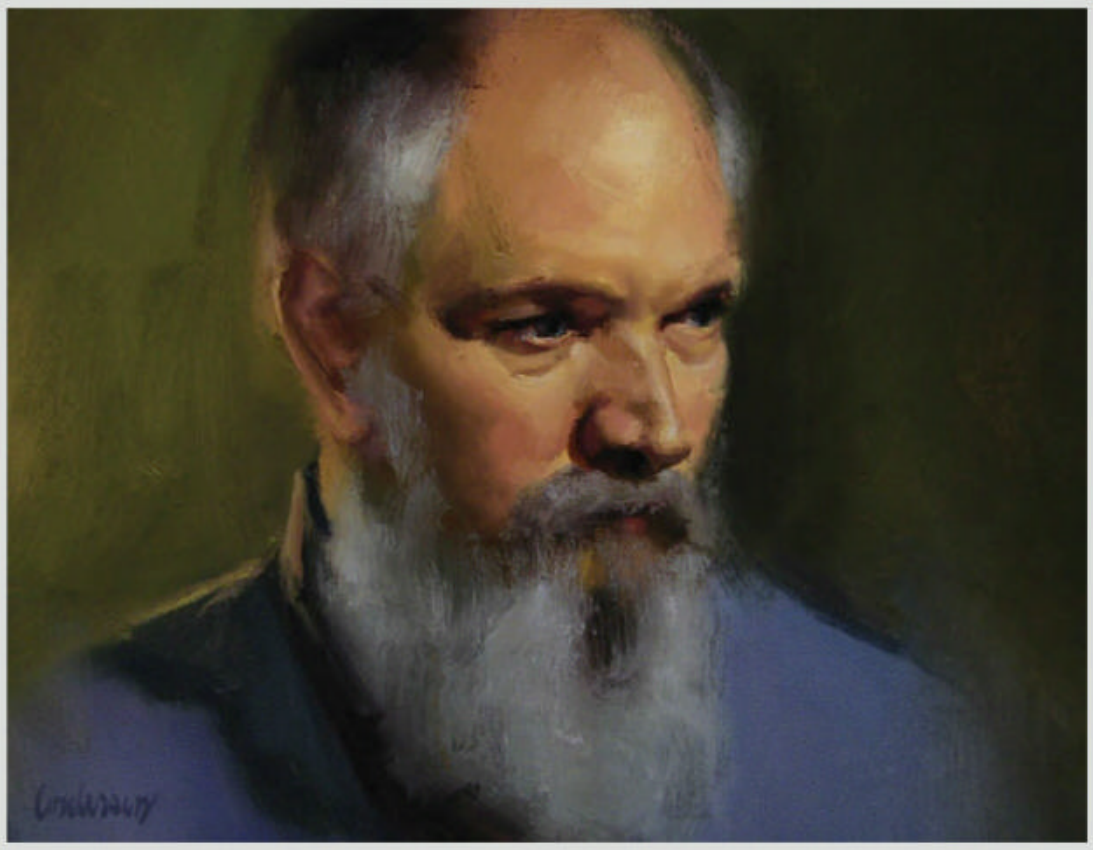

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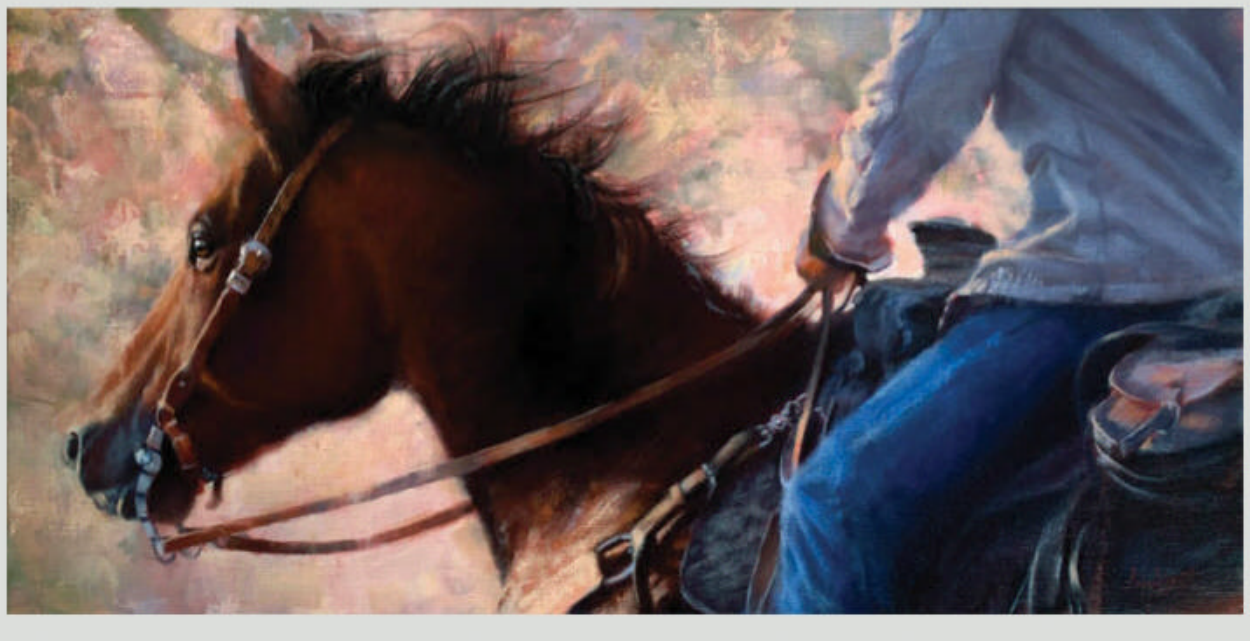

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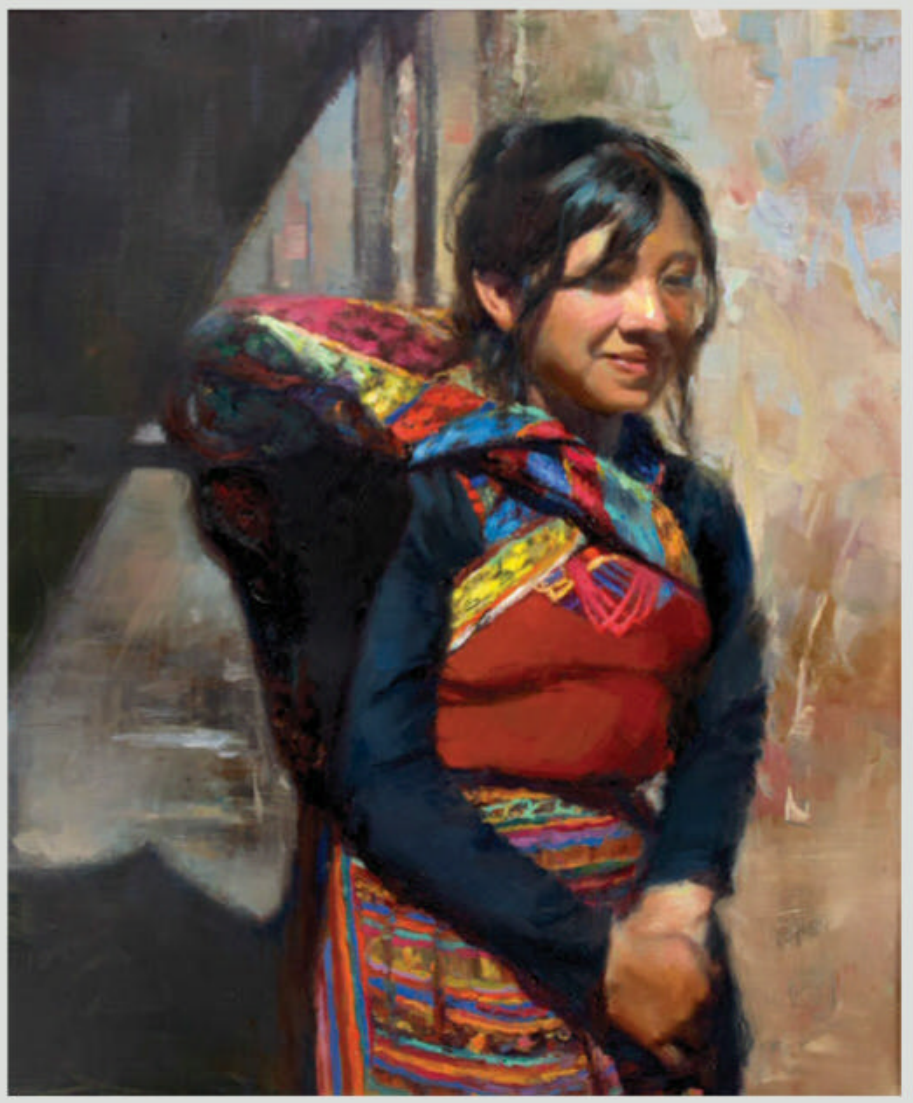

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THREE TO WATCH

There is a lot of superb art being made these days. This column shines light on a trio of gifted individuals.

SHANA LEVENSON (b. 1981), *Balancing*, 2019, oil on Dibond, 50 x 50 in., McLarry Fine Art (Santa Fe)

SHANA LEVENSON *(b. 1981)* has been painting portraits and figures professionally for only five years, but in that short time she has moved quickly to the forefront of the contemporary realist scene. After starting in fashion design — she received her B.F.A. in fashion merchandising from the University of Texas (Austin) — and the birth of her daughter and son in 2009 and 2010, she went on to earn her M.F.A. from Academy of Art University (San Francisco) in 2015. Several workshops (including those with her now-husband, the artist David Jon Kassan) and miles of canvas later, Levenson began showing her paintings in respected galleries, winning awards at prestigious events, taking on commissions, and offering workshops through her Albuquerque studio.

As a mother, wife, painter, teacher, and businesswoman, Levenson has a lot on her plate but is by nature a proactive seeker of center and balance when life starts to lose equilibrium. She honestly shares some of the questions and struggles she faces through straightforward, unflinching self-portraits. In *Balancing*, for instance, we see the artist sitting on a chair in a position that looks like she is either in prayer or has taken a moment to pause and collect herself. The lovely lace dress she wears — painted with exacting detail — and the calming aura of blue-green light pervading the image further suggest that Levenson is searching for serenity.

"*Balancing* is about the voices battling within ourselves," Levenson says. "'Don't do this ... do that'; 'you look fat ... love your body'; 'I'm a great mom ... am I screwing up my kids?' The many positive and negative thoughts that run through our minds can be overwhelming! I originally was going to have my kids draw little cartoon pictures of devils and angels battling each other in the background, but, after finishing the figure, I realized that wasn't necessary. The emotion was there, without having to offer other images. It's cathartic to be able to paint our inner turmoil, but it doesn't necessarily fix it. It's a constant balancing act."

An introspective artist with a sharp memory and a tendency for nostalgia, Levenson not only creates self-reflective self-portraits but also series that illustrate specific chapters of her life or sentiments about humanity. One example is her *Beyond the Illness* series, which shows survivors of AIDS or people affected by the disease. (Having an uncle who passed from AIDS when she was 12 significantly impacted her life.) In another self-portrait, *Blinded*, Levenson uses herself to comment on a universal humanitarian need. "It is so easy to live our lives in our own little bubbles," she says. "With all the issues going on, I wanted to express how important it is to cut off our blinders and try to open our eyes to the needs around us. We are all connected, no matter where we live in the world, and we need to be more proactive in helping one another."

— Allison Malafronte

LEVENSON *is represented by McLarry Fine Art (Santa Fe), Meyer Gallery (Park City, Utah), and Stone Sparrow Gallery (New York City).*

JACOB DHEIN (b. 1978), *Classical Musician #3*, 2020, oil on panel, 39 x 39 in., collection of the artist

The artist **JACOB DHEIN** *(b. 1978)* paints a variety of subjects — city streets slick with rain, performing artists in dynamic motion, nudes, portraits — in such a manner that it seems as if the image is comprised of both paint and megapixels. In some images, the duality between digital influence and painterly tradition is held in perfect tension; in others, sections of realism break open into energetic explosions of color, dragged palette-knife streaks, and slashing brushstrokes. In still others, there is an almost classical stillness to the form and tonalist palette Dhein uses to portray more atmospheric motifs.

When it comes to subjects for his portraits and figures, this 41-year-old artist finds interest in a variety of people, in particular other creatives. Mid-movement stills of ballerinas dancing across the canvas are a common theme, as are portraits of various types of musicians. In his painting *Classical Musician #3*, for instance, Dhein pays homage to a gifted cellist. "The classical arts are a great source of inspiration," he shares. "Recently a professional cellist gave an elegant private performance during a modeling session, and it was a very unique experience. Getting to know the musician personally also helped stimulate my creativity. After experiencing such grandeur, my goal was to create something beautiful with a modern twist, by combining a contemporary and traditional approach."

Dhein's penchant for traditional and contemporary was acquired both from artists he admires and his self-education and experimentation. He received his B.F.A. from the University of Wisconsin (Oshkosh) in 2006. Upon graduating, he held a day job while continuing to pursue further education through workshops and taking on portrait commissions. In 2009 Dhein committed to painting full-time. Realizing he needed to extend his education further, he decided to earn his M.F.A. from Academy of Art University (San Francisco). He graduated in 2014, and began teaching drawing and painting there that same year.

— Allison Malafronte

DHEIN *is represented by Abend Gallery (Denver), Galerie L'Oeil du Prince (Biarritz, France), Jessup Cellars Gallery (Yountville, California), and Stricoff Fine Art Gallery (New York City). A solo exhibition of Dhein's recent work will be on view at the Wausau Museum of Contemporary Art (Wisconsin) from June 9 through August 1.*

KEN GOSHEN (b. 1988), *Moore*, 2019, oil on paper, 8 x 8 in., private collection

The subject was ready for its close-up. The painter **KEN GOSHEN** *(b. 1988)* ensured that sunlight and shadow were balanced perfectly in his Astoria, Queens, studio so as to best capture the nuances of his sitter: a torn loaf of challah bread, with its billowing, yeasty interior and shiny browned crust.

Goshen's series of challah bread paintings epitomizes his work as a portraitist and also his adherence to techniques both classical and contemporary. "With these works," explains the boyishly exuberant artist, "I want to combine the visual language of classical paintings with the way we look at art today. Bread has a way of influencing our associative image bank, like when you look at clouds and see faces, animals, bodies. In addition, challah has a cultural significance for me," says Goshen, who was raised in Jerusalem but now works in New York as an artist and teacher. "Where I come from, bread brings people together. I feel an extra responsibility to paint the challah well, knowing it's not going to be shared or consumed. I need to deliver on doing a really good painting of it."

On Sunday afternoons, you might well find Goshen at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, leading his students through drawing and sketching exercises. There he often brings them before masterworks by Ingres, Rembrandt, Velázquez, and Caravaggio. Goshen is a thoughtful and spirited teacher, urging students to look — and keep looking — at the image before them. His goal during these four-week-long sessions is to teach light and shadow: "Understanding these two elements is the most fundamental lesson of drawing — how to take something out there and put it into shapes with the correct measure and proportion."

Goshen is also a tireless painter of people. After serving three years in the Israeli army, where there was no time for painting, he became an artist "so that I could paint all day long. I had built up a creative energy by not being able to, so now no amount of painting feels overwhelming. I could paint 12 hours a day."

Indeed, Goshen works as long as he can, resulting in an ever-growing body of paintings that includes an eerily lifelike self-portrait hearkening back to ancient Egyptian encaustics. Now he sees another objective in the distance — "to create my own art school. I have such a passion for painting that I'm just as happy to look at students' finished works as my own."

— David Masello

GOSHEN *is self-represented.*

TODAY'S MASTERS

BY DAVID MOLESKY

SEAN CHEETHAM
AN HONEST EDGE

Sean Cheetham (b. 1977) first appeared on my radar 15 years ago when his portrait of Chantal Menard, an artist friend with braids and tattooed arms, was circulated widely to promote the prestigious BP Portrait Award competition organized annually by London's National Portrait Gallery. Many people (including me) mistakenly assumed that Cheetham's painting had won the top prize. Even though it had not, the omnipresence of that advertisement powerfully announced the 28-year-old artist's arrival in the art world.

Two years later, in 2007, I fell in love with Cheetham's painting *Turtle Hill* when I spotted it in the catalogue accompanying the Long Beach Museum of Art's *About Face* portraiture exhibition. This Romantic scene, reminiscent of Caspar David Friedrich's famous *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*, depicts Cheetham and his now-deceased dog, Roscoe, on an outcropping surveying the Bay Area's rolling hills. During my visit to the museum in Long Beach, I noticed that the large banner announcing its recent acquisitions showcased another of Cheetham's paintings — confirming my suspicion that contemporary figurative art was starting its comeback. The painting on the banner showed the artist wearing a vintage white leather biker jacket with his arm around a woman sporting a punk hairstyle. I learned later that she is the mother of Cheetham's son, Gunnar.

While admiring it, I began to grasp what makes Cheetham's art so striking: he brings a genuine element of cool — a unique and honest edginess — to contemporary representational painting, which can often seem like the art world's nerd corner. Cheetham delivers on the advice I have long received from mentors and gallery owners: "Paint what you know; paint what you love." Unfortunately, much figurative art — be it historical or modern — falls

Portrait of Chantal Menard, 2004, oil on panel, 10 x 8 in., collection of the artist

(CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) *Turtle Hill*, 2007, oil on panel, 45 x 30 in., private collection ■ *White Leather*, 2005, oil on paper, 10 x 8 in., private collection ■ *Champagne Wishes and Caviar Dreams*, 2011, oil on paper, 10 x 8 in., private collection ■ *Coach Robbers*, 2016, oil on panel, 11 x 14 in., private collection

Justin Chancellor

Maynard James Keenan

All four portraits of the members of the band Tool were painted by Cheetham in 2019 in oils on panel and measure 12 by 9 inches. All are in the private collection of Tool.

into pastiches of itself: scenes of mythology, religion, genre, and other tropes. One aspect that is so radical, yet incredibly natural, about Cheetham's compositions is how they capture his forays into cultural realms outside painting and art. Rather than pulling from the vast sources of traditional subject matter, he draws from his life experience as an all-around cool dude of diverse interests.

MADE IN CALIFORNIA

In 2009 Cheetham and I were finally introduced by our fellow artist Marc Trujillo. I immediately found his laid-back, deadpan, and slightly twisted sense of humor perfectly in sync with how clearly he observes his surroundings, without the rose-tinted lens of classical idealism. Within a year I was visiting Cheetham's home near downtown Los Angeles; he still lives there and keeps a studio in the multi-car garage behind his apartment building. On the walls hung an eclectic mix of images, including Elvis, antique weaponry, and a painting of a dog attributed to Delacroix. Near Cheetham's easel rested a beautifully shaped wooden palette that his students had crafted for him. The garage space was interspersed with stacks of demo paintings made during his workshops, and with piles of hockey gear. (Hockey-playing caused the "shiner" of a black eye Cheetham sports in his 2011 self-portrait illustrated here.) Also cluttering this makeshift storage area were the heaps of wires, amps, and other equipment used by his rock band, Del Toro. This trio's other members include Jeff Nentrup and Johnpaul Altamarino, whom Cheetham met while studying at Pasadena's ArtCenter College of Design.

Having grown up in San Francisco obsessed with *Star Wars*, Cheetham dreamed of making storyboards for similar movies. In 1998, the 20-year-old enrolled at ArtCenter — a major pipeline to the entertainment industry — and went on to earn a B.F.A. in illustration with honors. "Illustration is about getting the job done," Cheetham explains. "We would often get painting assignments that had to be completed overnight. It was like boot camp, in a way; the school got people ready to work."

Partway through the program, Cheetham found himself hooked on oil painting, mesmerized by its alluring goopiness. He had started taking classes with Michael Hussar, the school's head painting instructor and an influential artist known for dark pop-surrealist images of ghoulish figures. Cheetham notes that "whole generations of artists use Hussar's system of observation, and also his methods for organizing a palette." Their student-mentor connection blossomed and the pair began organizing group sessions to paint models from life in the evenings away from school — an ideal opportunity for accelerated growth and learning. Cheetham's bandmates were among the painters in this group who shared a loose yet precise approach, in which unblended patches of paint are applied with extraordinary accuracy.

In 2012, this group of friends found a new playground when Nentrup and his wife, Sonya Palencia, also a gifted artist, moved to a small ranch community in Los Padres National Forest. These new digs provided a perfect setting to delve into the group's longstanding fascination with the Wild West. Cheetham recalls, "As a kid, I would dress up as the Lone Ranger and play the theme song and get really excited. It has always been a thing for me." Using dirt bikes as trusty steeds, the trio would ride through the dry chaparral and sometimes shoot at a firing range, closing the day around a fire while drinking and grilling. "We thought it was so much fun that it should be illegal, but it was legal.

Adam Jones

Danny Carey

We had the idea to make some paintings of ourselves doing this. Then Fouladi Projects asked me to mount a three-person show." In 2013, this San Francisco gallery opened the exhibition *Ballad Del Toro*, featuring paintings by each of the band members. I was lucky to attend its lively opening and the mini-concert afterward, though Cheetham reports the show itself "wasn't a huge success. I think only a few things sold. People are always asking me for paintings of tattooed women, but I can't cater to that market all the time."

Indeed, Cheetham's paintings in this vein have always won acclaim. Many students and emerging painters, intrigued by his ability to capture likeness and depict tattoos, wanted to learn his techniques. Immediately after graduating from ArtCenter, he was invited to teach at the Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Art, launching his career as a highly sought-after instructor around the world. He now limits his workshops to 10 or 12 per year, with pupils ranging in age from kindergarten (at his son's school) through the elderly.

In 2007, Cheetham was offered a teaching position at ArtCenter and six years ago he became a full-time, salaried instructor there. Soon, however, he found himself living out of a suitcase: between teaching, traveling to workshops, and twice-monthly visits to see his son in San Francisco, there wasn't enough time to produce artworks for gallery shows. "Lately, I've backed out of most gallery stuff," he explains, and now he finds that illustration gigs are a more reliable way to get paid for new work. "Recently I painted portraits of the members of the band Tool. They paid me for the digital images and then bought the physical oil paintings as well. That was generous of them, and lucrative for me."

Eventually Cheetham felt run-down and realized that something had to give. Because his teaching at ArtCenter had become his

Sean Cheetham forging a palette knife, February 2020

Saloon Brawl Study, 2018, oil on Dibond, 7 x 5 in., private collection

least favorite activity, he quit last year, recognizing that his workshop pupils were much more eager to learn than those at school. He adds, "With workshops, there's no homework or grading, or having to punish people who don't want to learn."

NEW HORIZONS

One benefit of leaving full-time teaching has been the availability of time for other creative pursuits. Cheetham's father is a retired jeweler whose work instilled the young artist with a deep appreciation for meticulous detail. He recalls "trying to make a sword and chainmail with my uncle and a crusader-type helmet with my dad's friends." During a trip to Sweden in 2015, Cheetham visited a knifesmith's shop. Its cool minimalism reignited his desire to try his hand at this craft, so in Los Angeles he started taking classes at a blacksmithing shop. This past year, Cheetham dedicated one of his garage's spaces to metalworking. So far he has made elaborate cowboy-style knives, as well as a few special palette knives. Cheetham is pursuing this hobby for himself rather than for profit, despite the interest his social media posts have generated. "People are always asking if they can buy my knives," he observes. "But I don't think they could pay me enough. I'm worried about my passion becoming about money. Again."

Cheetham is now planning several larger paintings that evoke a sinister vision of the Old West, somewhat like that of the film director Quentin Tarantino. "I'm going to make a very large brawling piece and videotape the process. It will feature some of the knives I've been making, and some of my friends who have been part of my journey will be featured. I want to include all of the different demographics who populated the Old West, battling it out. I can't just make 'pretty sunset' kinds of paintings. I'm interested in some of the darker themes in American history, like the Donner party."

Unfortunately, Cheetham's current studio is too small to accommodate these new projects, so he will create them nearby at Nohwave, a production studio that has already filmed videos of him demonstrating his *alla prima* painting technique. Now Nohwave will document every step in Cheetham's new multi-figure works, and ultimately the artist will create his own videos capturing his technical process.

Cheetham also sometimes offers one-on-one instruction. For almost a year, he taught a famous Hollywood actor privately — a few days each week in Northern California and a few in Los Angeles. She then recommended him to a friend who comes from a high-profile film industry family. That pupil participated in Cheetham's workshop in Rome, where "they were photographed by paparazzi constantly."

Things are going well for Cheetham on another front, too. His girlfriend, Kate Zambrano, teaches painting in the atelier tradition to underprivileged city teenagers who could not otherwise afford art school or workshops. Now she is creating a scholarship program in partnership with art supply firms and a filmmaker who is establishing an inner-city arts center. Cheetham reflects, "I used to think that it might not be right to date another artist, but you just have to find the right one. Kate and I have a bunch of gigs lined up the rest of the year; we will be teaching different classes within the same workshop — in Scottsdale, Bakersfield, Chattanooga, and Rome. It's really great." ●

DAVID MOLESKY *is an oil painter based in Brooklyn, known for his nature narratives and paintings of turbulent water and fiery infernos. His upcoming online-only solo exhibition with Andra Norris Gallery (Burlingame, California) is titled* Her *and will run from May 8 through July 4.* *(See page 95 for details.)*

(OPPOSITE PAGE) *Kate*, 2019, oil on panel, 14 x 11 in., private collection

TODAY'S MASTERS

BY MATTHIAS ANDERSON

PARKS TO BE PROUD OF

With summer just around the corner, the editorial team at *Fine Art Connoisseur* opted to focus on the remarkable parks and historic sites that grace every region of the United States.

Since 1872, our National Park System has grown from a single site (Yellowstone National Park) to include more than 415 natural, historical, recreational, and cultural areas throughout the U.S. and its territories. They now encompass not only national parks, but also national monuments, memorials, military parks, historic sites, parkways, recreation areas, seashores, scenic riverways, and scenic trails. The U.S. was the first country to develop such a program, and it has subsequently been complemented by thousands of sites designated and operated by states, counties, cities, and other jurisdictions.

The attendance figures at America's national parks are nothing less than staggering. Last year, California's Golden Gate National Recreation Area welcomed 15 million people; the Blue Ridge Parkway 14.9 million; the Great Smoky Mountains National Park 12.5 million; New York and New Jersey's Gateway National Recreation Area 9.4 million; the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., 7.8 million; and so on.

Of course, when we say "national park," many of us conjure up spectacularly picturesque sites in the West: Grand Canyon National Park had 5.7 million visitors last year; Rocky Mountain National Park 4.7 million; Zion National Park 4.5 million; Yosemite National Park 4.5 million; Yellowstone National Park 4 million; Grand Teton National Park 3.4 million; and Glacier National Park 3 million.

Illustrated here is a medley of artworks made in — and in homage to — these beloved sites. In their captions we have indicated which park or site the artist was admiring that day, and now we encourage you to visit your own favorites. After such a difficult spring, all Americans truly deserve to enjoy their restorative parks and other places of natural beauty. ●

LYN BOYER (b. 1952), *Our Better Angels* [Grand Canyon National Park], 2019, oil on linen, 30 x 40 in., private collection

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

18+

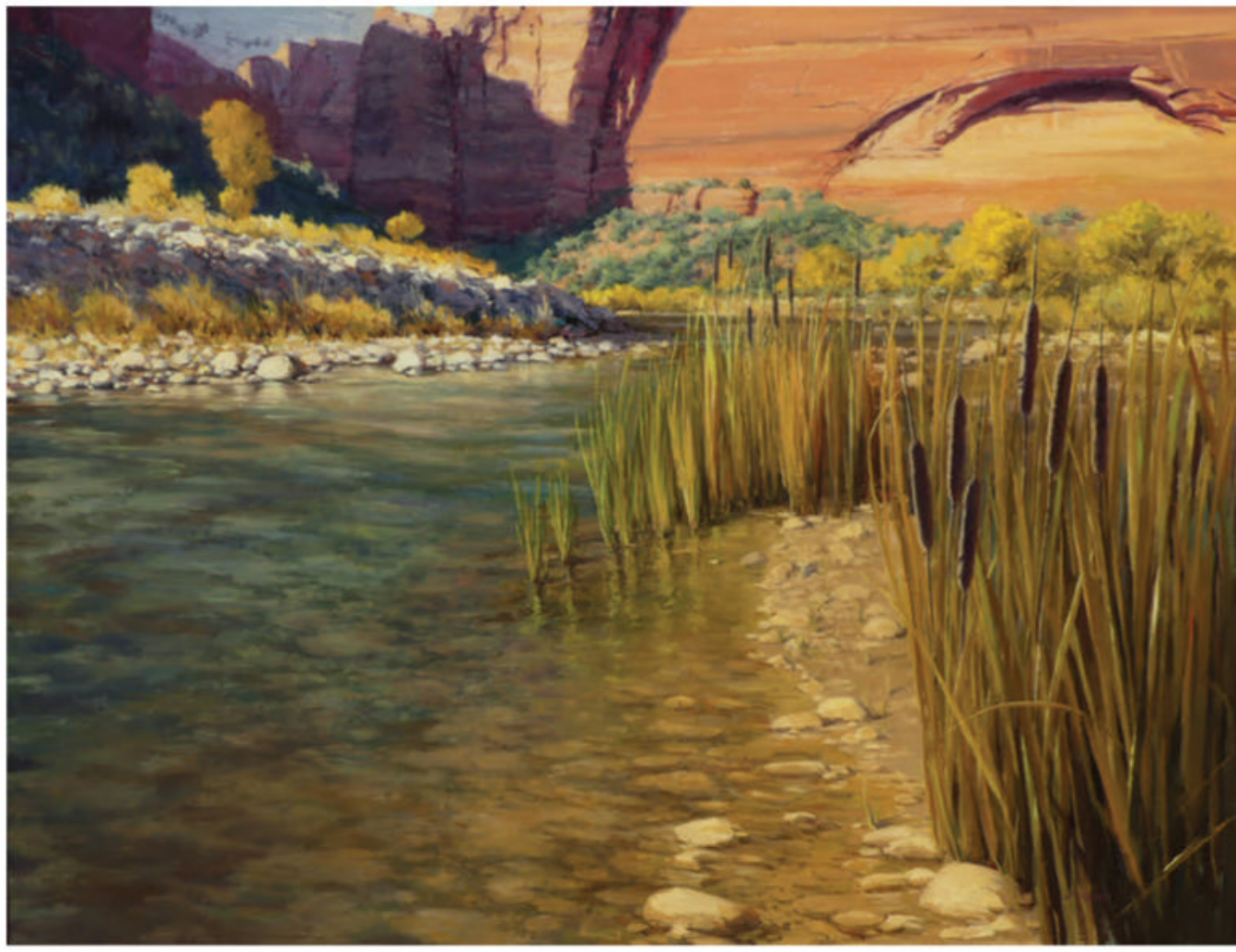
WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

KENT SULLIVAN (b. 1952), *Silent Path [Everglades National Park, Florida]*, 2017, oil on canvas, 24 x 36 in., private collection

VERYL GOODNIGHT (b. 1947), *Under the Spell of Denali [Denali National Park & Preserve, Alaska]*, 2019, oil on linen, 30 x 48 in., Veryl Goodnight Gallery (Mancos, Colorado)

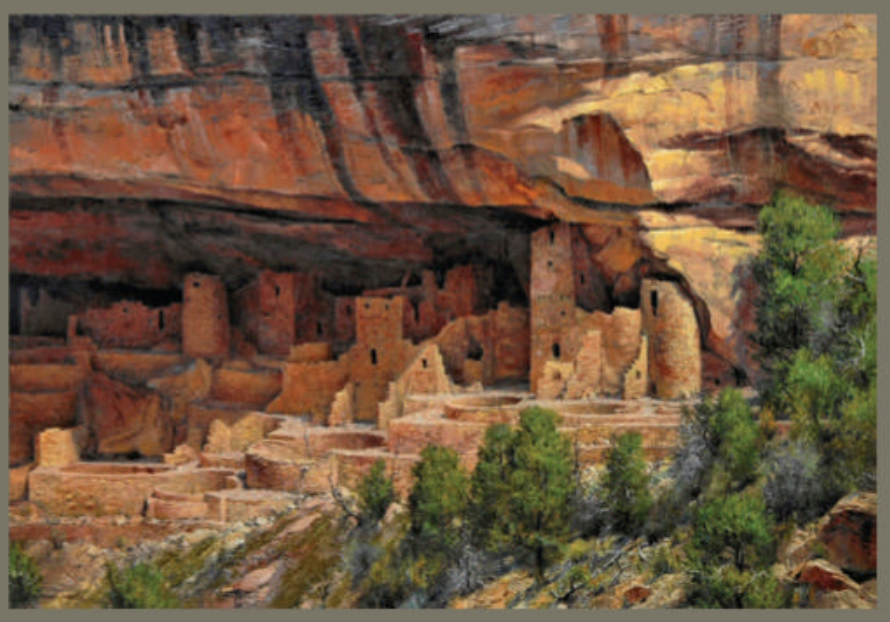
(ABOVE) **JOHN CAGGIANO** (b. 1949), *Sleepy Dunes* [Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Michigan], 2019, oil on linen panel, 12 x 24 in., available from the artist ■ (RIGHT) **JUDY A. CROWE** (b. 1953), *Desert Drama* [Saguaro National Park, Arizona], 2014, oil on linen on panel, 12 x 9 in., available from the artist ■ (BELOW) **MARK EBERHARD** (b. 1949), *Moose-Wilson, July 5, 2014, 10:59am* [Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming], 2018, oil on canvas, 40 x 40 in., private collection

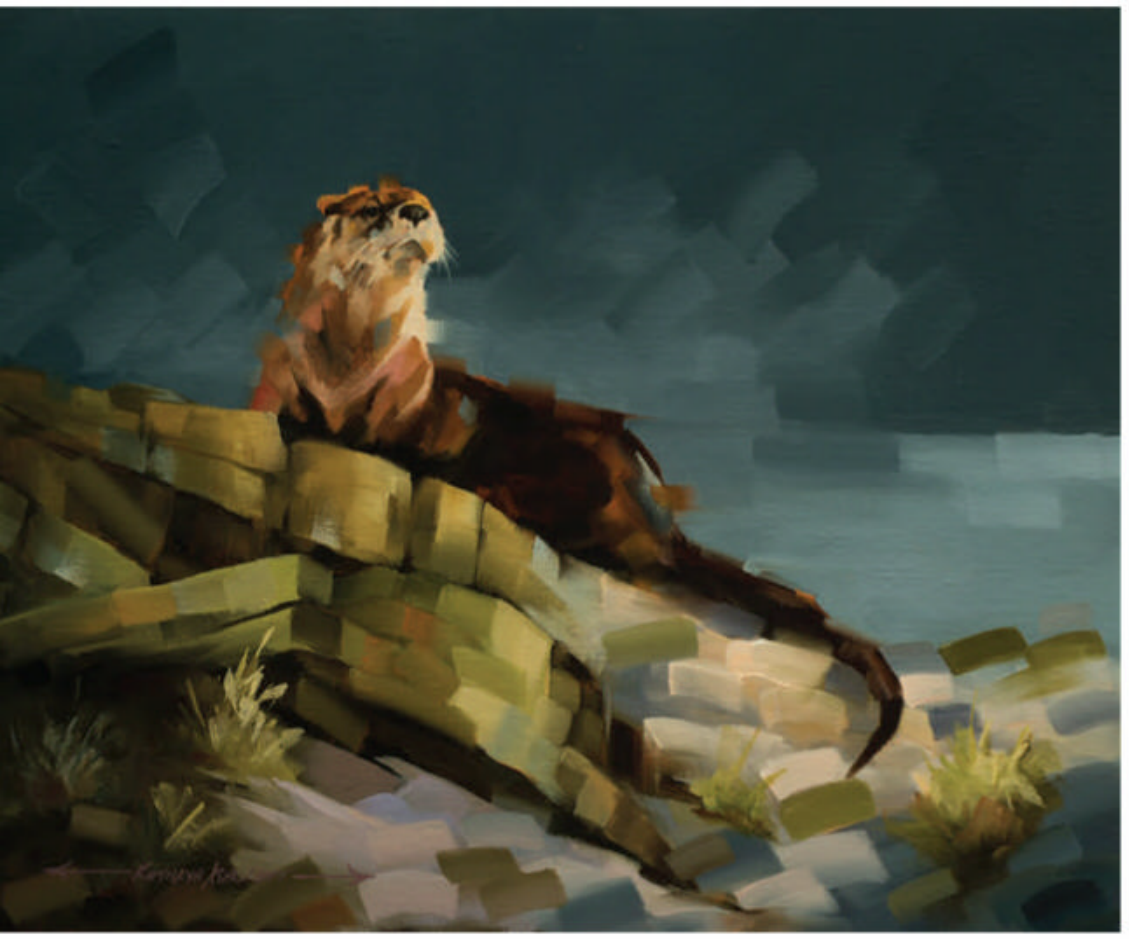
(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) **JOHN BUXTON** (b. 1939), *Great Falls of the Passaic* [Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park, New Jersey], 2013, oil on linen, 56 x 35 in., private collection ■ **DAVID HARMS** (b. 1960), *Late Summer Runoff* [Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado], 2019, oil on canvas, 34 x 48 in., Wildhorse Gallery, Steamboat Springs, Colorado ■ **WALTER MATIA** (b. 1953), *Cry Havoc Peregrine Falcon* [Olympic National Park, Washington], 2019, bronze (unique), 88 x 30 x 18 in., to be shown at the *Prix de West* in Oklahoma City this summer (see page 71) ■ **SARAH HARLESS** (b. 1984), *Alpine* [Big Bend National Park, Texas], 2019, pastel on board, 6 x 8 in., available from the artist

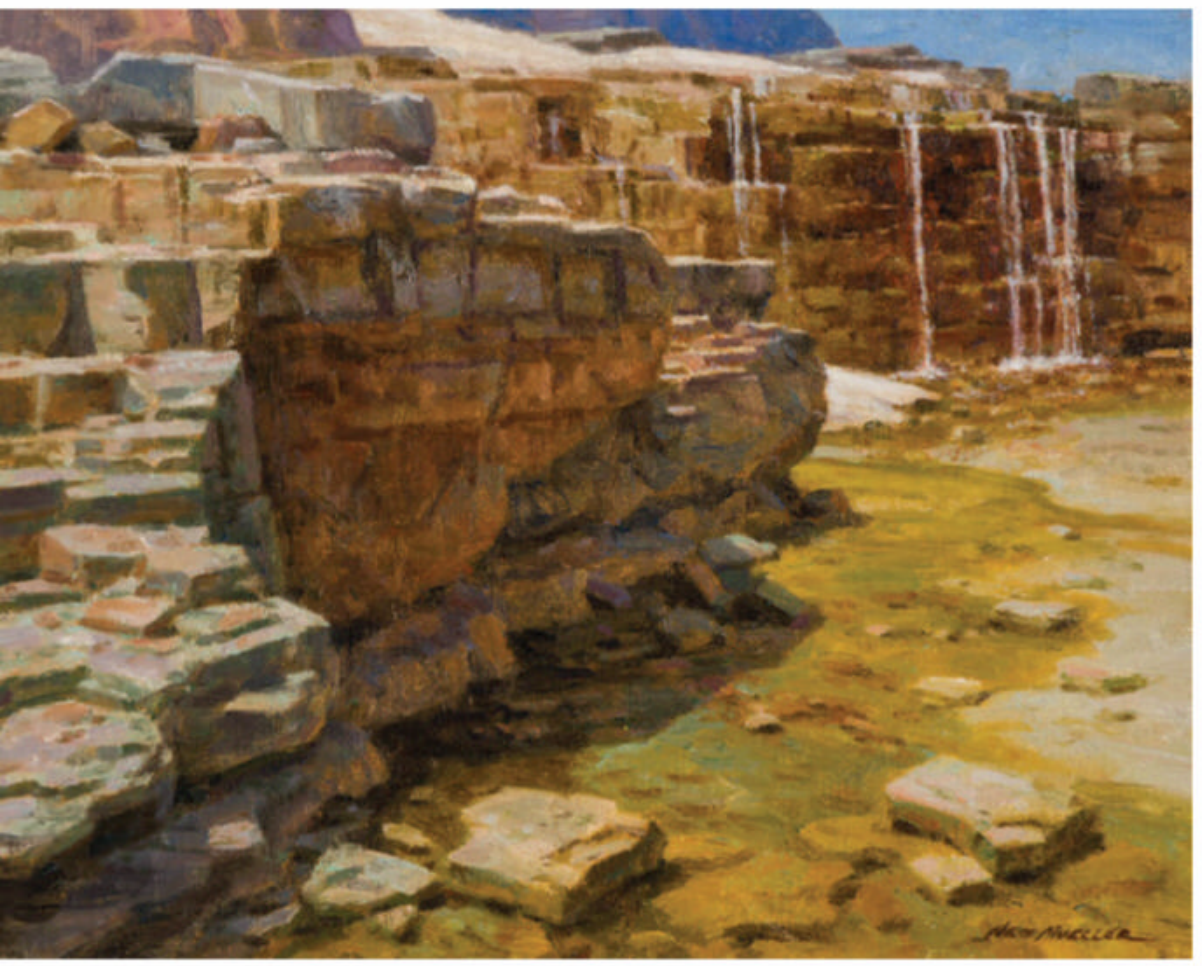


(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) **CATHERINE HILLIS** (b. 1953), *Sapelo Island Range Front Light* [Sapelo Island, Georgia], watercolor on paper, 14 x 11 in., collection of the artist ■ **KATE STARLING** (b. 1956), *Big Bend* [Zion National Park, Utah], 2019, oil on canvas, 56 x 72 in., Marshall Gallery of Fine Art, Scottsdale ■ **KATHRYN MAPES TURNER** (b. 1971), *Mammoth Springs* [Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming/Montana/Idaho], 2018, oil on board, 9 x 12 in., private collection ■ **CHARLES NEWMAN** (b. 1976), *Market East Corridor* [City Hall, Philadelphia], 2016, oil on panel, 24 x 12 in., collection of the artist ■ **SUSIEHYER** (b. 1954), *Perched above the Canyon* [Grand Canyon National Park], 2019, oil on linen, 30 x 40 in., available from the artist

(ABOVE LEFT) **KEN DAGGETT** (b. 1953), *Spider Rock* [Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Arizona], oil on canvas, 40 x 30 in., Meyer Gallery, Santa Fe ■ (ABOVE MIDDLE) **GIL DELLINGER** (b. 1942), *Yosemite Falls* [Yosemite National Park, California], 2019, acrylic on canvas, 84 x 48 in., St. Joseph's Hospital, Stockton, California ■ (ABOVE RIGHT) **KEVIN RED STAR** (b. 1943), *Crow Indian War Chiefs* [Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming/Montana/Idaho], 2017, acrylic on canvas, 60 x 48 in., private collection ■ (LEFT) **KIRK MCBRIDE** (b. 1952), *Small Waves at Sunrise* [Assateague Island National Seashore, Maryland/Virginia], 2015, oil on canvas, 24 x 48 in., private collection ■ (BELOW LEFT) **MARI BOLEN** (b. 1944), *Prairie Passage* [National Bison Range, Montana], 2011, bronze (edition of 15), 16 x 39 x 11 in., Bolen Bronze Gallery, Hamilton, Montana ■ (BELOW RIGHT) **ROBERT PETERS** (b. 1960), *Ancestral Cliffs* [Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado], 2009, oil on linen, 30 x 44 in., private collection







(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) **KATHRYN ASHCROFT** (b. 1961), *All That and More* [Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming], 2018, oil on linen, 16 x 20 in., Summit Gallery, Park City, Utah ■ **AMERY BOHLING** (b. 1976), *Virga Showers* [Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona], 2019, oil on linen, 29 x 36 in., private collection ■ **P.A. NISBET** (b. 1948), *Thunder Comes Running* [Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Montana], 2018, oil on linen, 20 x 28 in., Meyer Gallery, Santa Fe ■ **JULIE RIKER** (b. 1969), *John Brown's Farm* [John Brown Farm State Historic Site, New York], 2019, oil on canvas, 12 x 12 in., available from the artist ■ **NED MUELLER** (b. 1940), *Rocks of Ages* [Glacier National Park, Montana], 2012, oil on linen panel, 11 x 14 in., private collection

(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) **JOHN HUGHES** (b. 1949), *Reflections of Morning* [Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming], 2015, oil on panel, 16 x 28 in., private collection ■ **PEGGY IMMEL** (b. 1943), *Daybreak* [Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming], 2019, oil on linen, 16 x 20 in., private collection ■ **SEPTEMBER VHAY** (b. 1968), *Levitate* [Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming], 2017, oil on linen, 18 x 27 in., private collection ■ **KATHY WIPFLER** (b. 1955), *Dust Wallow* [Grand Tetons National Park, Wyoming], 2006, oil on linen mounted on board, 11 x 14 in., private collection ■ **CALVIN LIANG** (b. 1960), *A View from Monument Valley* [Monument Valley Tribal Park, Utah/Arizona], 2019, oil on canvas, 22 x 30 in., collection of the artist

BY ROBERT TITUS AND JOHANNA TITUS

HISTORIC MASTERS

REDEFINING THE "SUBLIME" IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THOMAS COLE

We are scientists: Robert is a geologist and Johanna a biologist. Ours are the two leading sciences of the landscape. We are also residents of New York State's Catskill Mountains, so it should not surprise anyone that we harbor a passion for the Hudson River School of painters. Fortunately, scientists like us are well-positioned to offer insights on some of the leading themes of that talented group.

The Hudson River School was America's first formally recognized art movement. It thrived in the mid-19th century, starting when the English émigré Thomas Cole (1801–1848) began painting landscapes around the Catskill Mountain House Hotel (Fig. 1) at the summit of the "Wall of Manitou," a towering escarpment along the Catskills' eastern edge.

Cole first visited this region in 1825, early in his career, when it was still largely wilderness. The landscapes he painted that year contrasted dramatically with the park-like views that had long been featured in European landscape art. Little true wilderness still existed in Europe, but the Catskills offered it in abundance. The atmosphere and effect his canvases evoked soon came to be called "the Sublime."

Understanding the Sublime is central to understanding the Hudson River School, yet as a word, it has always been difficult to define precisely. To be Sublime, Nature is imagined not just as wilderness, but as wilderness with something vaguely dangerous, even ungodly, about it. Look at any forest scene (Fig. 2) painted by the Hudson River School's Asher B. Durand (1796–1886). It is easy to imagine entering his dense, wild woodlands, but then you must ask yourself, "Can I be certain I will ever get out of them again?" The answer is no, you cannot, and that, we think, constitutes the scary part of the Sublime.

Fig. 1: SARAH COLE (1805–1857) after the original painted by her brother Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *A View of the Catskill Mountain House*, 1848, oil on canvas, 15 1/3 x 23 3/8 in., Albany Institute of History and Art

Fig. 2: **ASHER B. DURAND** (1796–1886), *Forest in the Morning Light*, c. 1855, oil on canvas, 24 3/16 x 18 3/16 in., National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Sublime; we came face to face with the Ice Age. This article presents our icy version of the Sublime.

ON THE TRAIL

We began at Site 7 on the Art Trail, a location called Sunset Rock (Fig. 3). It's a rocky promontory that affords hikers a view we consider one of the finest east of the Rockies. Cole painted it several times. Spread out across the Brooklyn Museum's version (Fig. 4) are the Catskills that first captivated Cole in 1825. In the distance is the Catskill Mountain House Hotel, which became 19th-century America's finest resort and the birthplace of all Catskills culture, including the Hudson River School. Above it is South Mountain, and beyond, mostly out of sight, is Kaaterskill Clove — a scenic wonder and key site for the movement. (The word "clove" bewilders some people today; in this context it is not an herb, but rather a chasm that has been cleaved by Nature.)

There is something else happening here. When we, as geologists, stand on Sunset Rock, it becomes 25,000 years ago. We look left into the Hudson River Valley and see it filling with a great glacier, moving south very slowly. The ice rubs up against the Wall of Manitou, which Cole portrayed just to the left of the hotel. The glacier's grinding motions are carving this centerpiece of Catskills scenery, including the ledge on which the hotel would someday stand. As we watch, the ice swells up below us, crosses the ledge, and spreads to the right and toward the west. Its abrasive motions carve the basin of North Lake that Cole painted. From Sunset Rock, we have "witnessed" glaciers creating a famous Catskills landscape.

The two of us have spent much time exploring the Catskills, in and around where Cole worked, and we think there is more to the Sublime than "wild and scary." Please visit the area and see for yourself: many of Cole's early landscapes can be seen in what is now the North Lake Campground, which is open to the public. Located in the village of Catskill is Cole's studio house, Cedar Grove. It was designated a National Historic Site in 1999 in order to enhance understanding of the Hudson River School through architectural preservation, exhibitions, and scholarly study. Having been members of this nonprofit organization right from the start, we have watched with pleasure as it has earned a sterling reputation in all of these pursuits.

Cedar Grove has always reached out to the general public. One example is its publication online of the *Hudson River School Art Trail* guide (hudsonriverschool.org). This major endeavor points visitors to many of the exact spots where Cole and his colleagues made their sketches. When we first undertook this tour following in their footsteps, we discovered another, more scientific understanding of the

(TOP RIGHT) Fig. 3: View of North and South Lakes from Sunset Rock today ■ (RIGHT) Fig. 4: **THOMAS COLE** (1801–1848), *A View of the Two Lakes and Mountain House, Catskill Mountains, Morning*, 1844, oil on canvas, 35 13/16 x 53 7/8 in., Brooklyn Museum, New York

(TOP) Fig. 5: THOMAS COLE (1801–1848), *From the Top of Kaaterskill Falls*, 1826, oil on canvas, 31 1/8 x 41 1/8 in., Detroit Institute of Arts ■ **(LEFT) Fig. 6:** Looking down from the top of Kaaterskill Falls today

Next, the Art Trail guide pointed us to Site 5, the top of Kaaterskill Falls. Cole came here in 1825 and produced one of the first Hudson River School paintings (Fig. 5). We explored a bit and found the very ledge where he must have sat as he sketched. A bit awed, we took turns sitting there and took our own photograph (Fig. 6). But there was more: we stepped forward a few feet and gazed beyond the lip of the falls. Again, we had entered the Ice Age. A glacier was advancing up the clove below us. The same ice we had just seen from Sunset Rock was now rising up Kaaterskill Clove, pushed from behind. It was sculpting the very landscape that Cole would later paint. We watched with fascination, beginning to understand that it was ice that created so much of this scenery.

We then found our way to Site 6 and beheld the modern-day view of Cole's *Lake with Dead Trees* (Fig. 7). Cole had also sketched this place in 1825, but, once again, "we were there" during the Ice Age. Advancing toward us, that same Kaaterskill Falls glacier was grinding its way into the local bedrock. This powerful force was scouring out the South Lake basin (Fig. 8) that Cole would paint.

A visit to Site 4 would reveal more. There Cole made another of his early views, this one looking down Kaaterskill Clove (Fig. 9). Five miles long, a mile across, and a thousand feet deep, this chasm would lure future generations of landscapists, but Cole got there first. Kaaterskill Clove truly merits the adjective "awesome" — too grand to be compressed into one artistic view. Perhaps that's why Cole chose to paint only its narrow upstream end.

We took a hiking trail out along the clove's north rim, unexpectedly journeying 15,000 years back in time. Standing on Inspiration Point (Fig. 10), below us we could see the clove filled with ice, a lower part of that same Kaaterskill Falls glacier. But now the climate had warmed; this ice was melting. We could hear the powerful subglacial flow of meltwater, muffled far beneath its icy surface. Down there, that torrent was cutting through the glacier and into the clove's bedrock

bottom. It was carving the deep, narrow canyon that has beckoned generations of painters.

Site 5 relates to what is perhaps Cole's most famous painting, which depicts Kaaterskill Falls from below (Fig. 11). This is another of the early scenes that launched his career. He eliminated all evidence of the modern tourist industry, painting it instead as his prehistoric Sublime. A single Native American stands atop the lower falls surveying the scene.

We found our way to the bottom of the falls on a foggy day and looked into the past (Fig. 12). For us the Ice Age was just ending. Down the canyon, there was still a glacier, but above us enormous amounts of the remaining ice were quickly melting. Raging, foaming, pounding, thundering torrents were cascading over the top of Kaaterskill Falls. The sound was unbelievable and made worse by its echoing off the cliffs all around. It seems we had picked the most violent day in the history of the falls. Never before had so much water passed across it; never again would there be this much. We were watching the Sublime origins of Kaaterskill Falls.

NEW PERSPECTIVES

How much did Thomas Cole know of all this? Perhaps more than one might assume. Cole made the acquaintance of several accomplished geologists, the most notable being the Yale professor Benjamin Silliman. The theory of the Ice Age had just been born in the 1820s, so surely Cole was familiar with it. He could not have known the full extent to which glaciers had created his beloved landscapes, but he almost certainly knew they had been there.

For us, it had been quite the adventure. We had explored Thomas Cole's Catskills realm and discovered something fundamental about

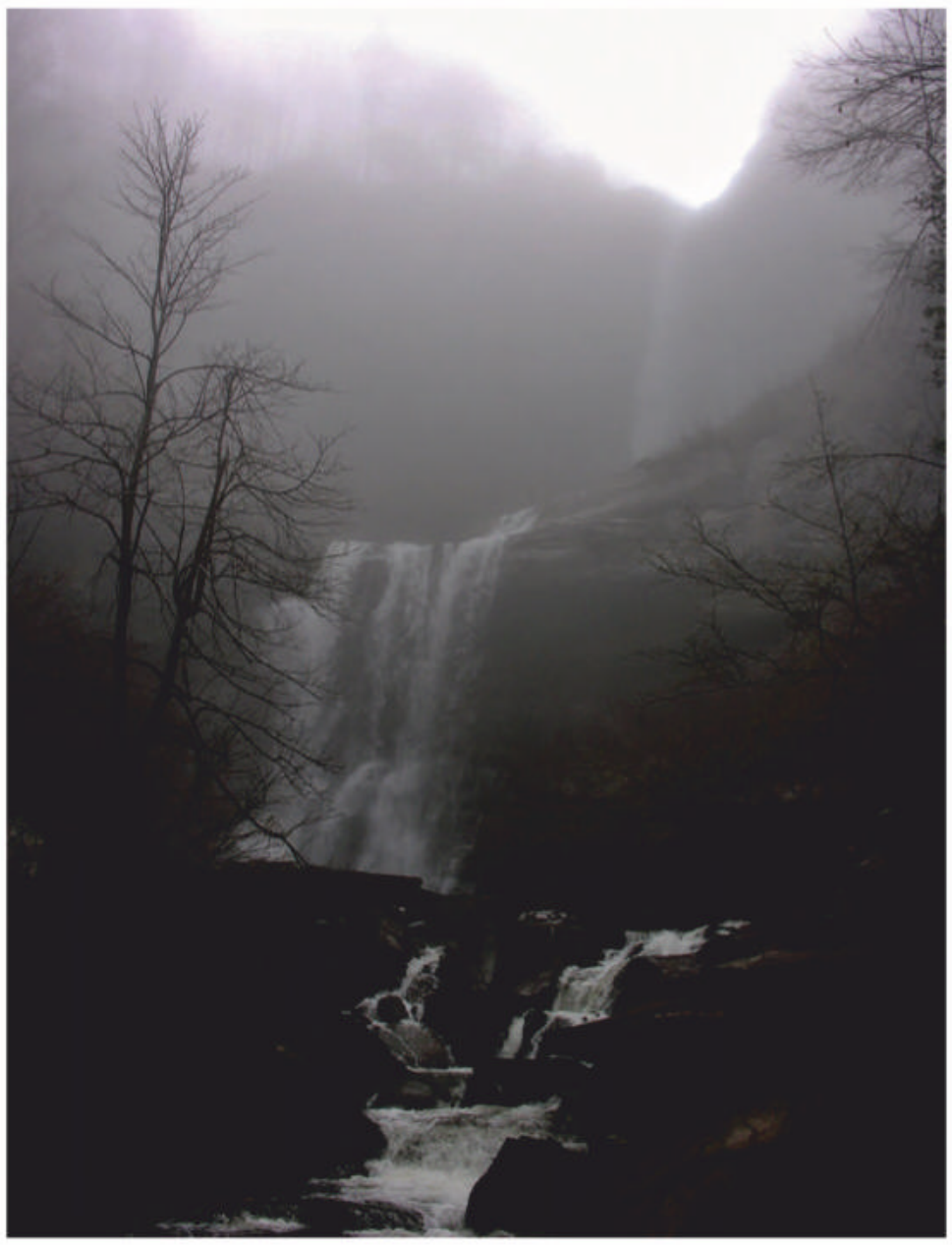
(BELOW) Fig. 7: THOMAS COLE (1801–1848), *Lake with Dead Trees (Catskill)*, 1825, oil on canvas, 27 x 33 3/4 in., Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio ■ (RIGHT) Fig. 8: South Lake today

the Sublime. We had always known that our beautiful Catskills had inspired much great art in the 19th century, but now we had looked deeper back in time. The Hudson River School artists painted these landscapes, but first the glaciers had sculpted them. Ultimately, both the landscapes and the paintings are gifts of the Ice Age. ●

(ABOVE) Fig. 9: THOMAS COLE (1801–1848), ***The Clove, Catskills*****, 1827, 25 1/4 x 35 in., New Britain Museum of American Art, Connecticut ■ (ABOVE RIGHT) Fig. 10: Inspiration Point, looking west in Kaaterskill Clove ■ (BELOW LEFT) Fig. 11: THOMAS COLE (1801–1848),** ***Kaaterskill Falls*****, 1825, oil on canvas, 49 x 36 in., private collection ■ (BELOW RIGHT) Fig. 12: Kaaterskill Falls today**

ROBERT TITUS, PHD *and* **JOHANNA TITUS** *are popular science writers, focusing on the geological history of the Catskills. They have authored* The Catskills in the Ice Age *(3rd edition, 2019, Purple Mountain Press and Black Dome Press). They can be contacted at randjtitus@prodigy.net and on September 13 they will lead a Hudson Valley Ramble through the landscapes around Olana, Frederic Church's studio home in Hudson, New York. To register, visit olana.org. Robert Titus took all of the modern photographs illustrated here, and the authors have sourced several of the historical images through Wikimedia Commons.*

Information: Cedar Grove: thomascole.org; Mountain Top Historical Society: mths.org.



BY DAVID MASELLO

HISTORIC MASTERS

DAVID PARK
FIGURING IT OUT

The two Bay Area softball-league teams took to the field for another game. The team known as the Figs (composed of figurative painters) appeared to be the aesthetic underdogs against the Creepy Crawlers (abstract expressionists) — especially during seasons from the mid-1940s to the early 1950s. That's when the loudest roars from the bleachers favored abstraction, the preferred style. While the scores of those games are not recorded for posterity, the debate continues as to which team won.

When the painter David Park (1911–1960) took to the field for the Figs, while he was teaching at San Francisco's California School of Fine Arts from 1944 to 1952, he could actually have played on both teams. Park, who soon became one of the founders and most prolific practitioners of the Bay Area Figurative Art Movement, had previously painted abstract works, almost all of which he destroyed. (Legend has it that, around 1950, he either burned the canvases or tossed them into a dump.) Though he embraced figuration, he produced art that still flirted with abstraction.

This dramatic shift, which lasted until his death at the age of 49, is celebrated and revealed to its fullest glory in *David Park: A Retrospective*, a show of 125 works mounted by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMoMA). This first large-scale exhibition of the artist in some 30 years runs through September 7, having enjoyed previous showings at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth and Michigan's Kalamazoo Institute of Arts. This project makes special sense at SFMoMA because in 1935, when the museum opened, its director Grace McCann Morley included in her inaugural exhibition three watercolors by Park, who was only 23 at the time.

Kids on Bikes, 1950, oil on canvas, 48 x 42 in., Myron Kunin Collection of American Art, Minneapolis

A UNIQUE PATH

"David Park charted his own path at a moment when painting from the figure was anything but the cool thing to do," says Janet Bishop, SFMoMA's chief

(ABOVE) *Mother and Child*, 1935, oil on canvas, 32 1/8 x 30 1/8 in., San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, bequest of Lydia Park Moore and Roy Moore © Estate of David Park, photo: Katherine du Tiel ■ (ABOVE RIGHT) *Woman with Baby*, 1960, gouache on paper, 14 x 11 in., private collection ■ (RIGHT) *Boston Street Scene*, 1954, oil on canvas, 45 5/8 x 59 in., San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, fractional gift of Mary and Howard Lester © Estate of David Park, photo: David Blank

curator and curator of painting and sculpture, who conceived and realized this project. “He painted in the abstract view in the postwar period, when the most interesting avant-garde painters on both coasts were doing the same. But it never felt authentic to him. When he stopped doing those works, he went on to make some of the most powerful figurative canvases of the 20th century.”

By embracing the human form, especially in motion — nudes wading in a river, jazz musicians blowing horns and fingering saxophones, a balloon seller working a city street — Park proved, ironically, to be the radical artist of his time, not his contemporaries, who included the likes of Jackson Pollock and Clyfford Still. In fact, Park’s friend Richard Diebenkorn, upon seeing one of those early figurative works, *Kids on Bikes* (1950), said, “My God, what’s happened to David?” — as though only a misguided artist would render a discernible depiction of figures at play and think it appropriate. (In time, Diebenkorn, who remained close with Park, would also embrace a more realistic approach. He became a leading member of the so-called Bay Area Figurative Painters, along with Park, Elmer Bischoff, and Paul Wonner.)

And yet Park appears never to have been dogmatic about his shift. During a 1952 interview, quoted in Bishop’s catalogue essay, he said, “I believe that the best painting America has produced is in the current non-objective direction,” a more polite term for abstraction. As to why he chose to depart from the movement that then ruled the galleries and art schools, Park added, “...I often miss the sting that I believe a more descriptive reference to some fixed subject can make.” While he acknowledged that some non-objective canvases can be “visually beautiful,” he also found them “insufficiently troublesome, not personal enough.” Though objections to his figuration were often personal in nature, he was diplomatic and generous enough to recognize the merits of both approaches. He could play on both teams in those softball games, though his preferred uniform was that of the Figs.

Four Men, 1958, oil on canvas, 57 x 92 in., Whitney Museum of American Art, purchase, with funds from an anonymous donor

Rehearsal, c. 1949–50, oil on canvas, 46 x 35 3/4 in., Oakland Museum of California, gift of the Anonymous Donor Program of the American Federation of Arts

Sara Wessen Chang, SFMOMA's curatorial assistant of painting and sculpture, was responsible for organizing the museum's accompanying show, *David Park and His Circle: The Drawing Sessions*. She also emphasizes the "radical" nature of what Park produced when he was producing it: "At the California School of Fine Arts, he felt very uncomfortable and forced to work in the abstract manner," says Chang. "He was the first one in his group to turn his back on the movement, and to make a bold move to paint what he wanted."

While it may be facile to say that those who prefer figurative art are, by nature, more people-oriented, remarks by Park certainly suggest he was involved with, and keenly observant of, day-to-day life. In 1952, he emphasized his desire "to paint subjects that I know and care about... in commonly seen attitudes. It is exciting to me to try to get some of the subject's qualities, whether warmth, vitality, harshness, tenderness, solemnness, or gaiety, into a picture."

Park's wife, Lydia, whom he married in 1930, remained a constant champion of his work and methodology, even when he impetuously quit his post in 1952 at the California School of Fine Arts (now called the San Francisco Art Institute) after a new director promulgated abstraction only. By that point, Park and his wife had two young daughters, Helen (who in 2015 published *David Park, Painter: Nothing Held Back*), and Natalie. Both have been closely supportive of the current exhibition.

It would be misleading to say Park enjoyed no success with his figurative scenes. When *Kids on Bikes* (1950) won an award at the San Francisco

(ABOVE) *Boy and Car*, 1955, oil on canvas, 18 x 24 in., private collection ■ (RIGHT) *Interior*, 1957, oil on canvas, 54 x 48 in., private collection, photo: Joshua Nefsky

Art Association Annuals, Lydia wrote to her sister-in-law, "It was a scream to see all the old kind of stuff, the non-objective, etc., with all the old 'modern' look about them in the gallery and to see this with a prize label on it."

Bishop recounts how Park's peers derided him for "chickening out" or suffering from a "failure of nerve" in his desire to paint what is discernible, real, all around us. Yet, even though the subject of *Kids on Bikes* is immediately graspable, the perspective from which Park chose to depict the boys is far from predictable. One boy looming in the immediate foreground is backdropped by another pedaling away on a bicycle with oddly large wheels; we see this retreating figure from an aerial perspective. Ghostly suggestions of other figures appear behind a white fence. Somehow the painting manages to be colorful, poetic, animated, and narrative in quality while the main figure appears contemplative as he grasps his curvaceous orange handlebars.

MAKING HIS OWN WAY

Park was born in Boston. Even though his family was learned and worldly, composed of teachers and ministers, he received little encouragement to become a painter, except from an aunt who lived in Los Angeles. At 17, he moved west to live with her while attending that city's Otis Art Institute. Upon graduating, at the height of the Depression, Park began painting murals through the Works Progress Administration (WPA). His future wife was the sister of Gordon Newell, a sculptor with whom he shared a studio in Los Angeles.

By 1936, Park, his wife, and their daughters returned to Boston. The late Paul Mills, who headed the Oakland Museum's art department in the 1950s, and who was responsible for conceiving the 1957 exhibition of the Bay Area New Figurative painters (the first of its kind), wrote that by 1941, Park had "moved from the figure styles of WPA art into the startling adventures of Cubism and other modernisms." Park and his family moved to the Bay Area, where he began teaching and indulging in what he tried to convince himself was his métier: abstraction. "By 1949 or 1950 he decided that the work he had been doing in this style was invalid, and he took almost all of his abstract canvases to the Berkeley dump and destroyed them," Mills wrote.

Throughout the 1950s, as Park's figuration gained a following — praise eventually outweighing derision — he secured teaching jobs, commissions, and, ultimately, a solo show at New York City's Staempfli Gallery in 1959. According to Chang, Park took a year's sabbatical from teaching to create more paintings for that show, a fortunate development given that some of his strongest works resulted during this period. These included *Four Men* (1958), one of whom might be a self-portrait; in this respect it was not the first of its kind, as the rakishly handsome artist is thought to have depicted himself in other works, such as the frankly depicted figure in *Standing Male Nude in Shower* of 1955. (Chang notes that *Four Men* has been rarely exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art since a 1988 Park show there.) Of this highly productive period leading up to the 1959 show, Bishop says, "Park was painting with an incredible command of his materials. And there's almost a teetering between recklessness and control. What resulted are potent, psychologically charged, energetic canvases." Though Park had typically painted in oils on canvas, he was shifting toward watercolors and gouache on paper.

Many of Park's figures from the late 1950s loom extra-large, close up on the canvas, their faces filling the ground, their gestures and expressions unignorable. His nude men and women are both painterly and alluring. "He loved to paint and he loved people," says Bishop. "He enjoyed drawing from both the female and male figure. He really was a humanist. And in his series of bathers, you don't see a preference for either clothed or unclothed figures." Chang adds, "He focused on moments of human experience, moments between people."

By 1959, Park was afflicted with debilitating chronic back pain and, as it turned out, cancer, which would claim him a year later. During Park's initial illness, Diebenkorn and other friends built for him a special desk at which he could paint on the ground floor of his Berkeley home. (He had recently been teaching at the University of California, Berkeley.) Lydia bought him all eight colors of what was then a brand-new medium, felt-tip pens. She also purchased a 30-foot-long roll of shelf paper. Every day, in his customized workspace, Park would unspool more of the scroll and produce another drawing, one melding with another, yet each its own distinct scene. Many referenced his boyhood, notably animated scenes from Boston Common — Sunday picnickers, rowboaters, sailors on leave, and nearby streetscapes. Mills likened the scroll to "a marvelous, spontaneous jazz improvisation," adding that "the style, the handling of the different subjects, the gradual or abrupt shifts of scene, everything about it suggests something that just happened as Park moved along."

Many scholars regard the scroll as a kind of visual autobiography, though Park departed from the chronology of actual events. Bishop emphasizes that the artist drew himself into many of its scenes. Because of his infirmity, Park apparently never saw the entire completed work, unspooled end to end; he would simply roll up the finished work after

Park's gift for lively brushwork and unexpected color combinations is evident in *Sink*, 1956, oil on canvas, 14 x 16 in., private collection, photo: JKA Photography

it dried and begin a new one on a blank surface. Due to the fragility of the scroll and the risk of further fading (early felt-tip ink is notoriously fugitive), portions of the scroll are being shown only at SFMoMA, while digital images of the full work were shown earlier in the national tour.

Almost too ironically, the scroll's final panel depicts a balloon seller, behind whom looms a street sign announcing "Dead End," accented with a skull-and-bones. Mills noted that, by this point, Park's illness had still not been diagnosed as final, though he seems to have grasped his fate. Referencing Park's entire output, Mills concluded, "He created a remarkable series of figures and heads imbued with a profound seriousness and directness as they stare at us, wide-eyed." So self-aware and confident was Park that in 1957 he was quoted in the catalogue accompanying Mills's show as saying, "As you grow older, it dawns on you that you are yourself — that your job is not to force yourself into a style, but to do what you want."

Park's art exemplifies the ongoing power of figuration. His people are expressive, yet elusive. We know where they are and what they are doing, but enough remains only suggested to keep the viewer questioning. Even with figures whose features are deliberately blurred or rudimentary, we somehow know their personalities and characters. Park painted from life, scenes of life. The people he saw, we now see. ●

DAVID MASELLO *is a New York–based writer on art and culture. He's a widely published essayist and poet, and several of his short plays have been produced in New York and Los Angeles.*

Information: Unless noted otherwise in the caption, all images are © Estate of David Park, courtesy Natalie Park Schutz, Helen Park Bigelow, and Hackett Mill, San Francisco. The exhibition is accompanied by a 220-page catalogue co-published by SFMoMA and the University of California Press. Also on view at SFMoMA through September 7, *David Park and His Circle: The Drawing Sessions* is a smaller exhibition that examines the weekly figure drawing sessions initiated by Park, Diebenkorn, and Bischoff in 1953. It features 33 drawings and two sketchbooks that capture the collegial and dynamic nature of these sessions. The distinguished San Francisco gallery Hackett Mill (hackettmill.com) is the exclusive representative of the estate of David Park.

ART IN THE WEST

THE WEST SPRINGS TO LIFE

ART FROM THE PLAINS

SAN ANGELO, TEXAS
americanplainsartists.com and fortconcho.com
June 25—August 2

The nonprofit organization American Plains Artists (APA) is set to host its 35th Annual Juried Exhibit & Sale at the Fort Concho National Historic Landmark. On view will be approximately 115 two- and three-dimensional representational artworks made in traditional media. All will depict some aspect of the Great Plains region — its landscape, wildlife, people, or way of life in historical or modern times. The participating artists hail from across the U.S. and several foreign countries, and their works will be examined closely by awards juror (and Cowboy Artists of America member) Wayne Baize.

This show's venue is fascinating in its own right. In 1867, Fort Concho was established on a 1,600-acre site in order to protect frontier settlements and to map the still-unfamiliar region of West Texas. At full strength, it housed 500 men, but in 1889 the last of them departed as the facility was decommissioned. Today Fort Concho National Historic Landmark encompasses most of the post's original footprint, plus 24 buildings that were constructed primarily of native limestone.

Fort Concho's historic headquarters building

GREAT ART FOR SALE

RENO, NEVADA
cdaartauction.com
July 25

The 35th annual Coeur d'Alene Art Auction will be held at Reno's Grand Sierra Resort this July. Over the past 15 years, this event has generated more than $325 million in sales of top-quality paintings and sculpture reflecting the American West. It holds over 160 world record prices, the highest of any auction in its field, with 96 percent of all lots sold on average.

VICTOR HIGGINS (1884—1949), *New Mexico Zinnias*, n.d., oil on canvas, 30 x 26 in., estimate $200,000—$300,000

On offer this summer will be major works by such historical masters as Ernest Blumenschein, Eanger Irving Couse, Carl Rungius, and Charles M. Russell, plus contemporary ones like Ken Carlson, Z.S. Liang, Richard Schmid, and Andy Thomas. Included will be a large single-owner collection of works by Edward Borein, O.C. Seltzer, Olaf Wieghorst, and other artists.

TUCKER SMITH (b. 1940), *The Refuge*, 1994, oil on canvas, 36 x 120 in., JKM Collection, National Museum of Wildlife Art © Greenwich Workshop

CELEBRATING A MODERN MASTER

JACKSON, WYOMING
wildlifeart.org
May 23—August 23

The National Museum of Wildlife Art owns a whopping 27 works by the master painter Tucker Smith (b. 1940), a coup that makes it the ideal institution to organize the national touring retrospective *Tucker Smith: A Celebration of Nature*. Guest curator B. Byron Price (director of the University of Oklahoma's Charles M. Russell Center for the Study of Art of the American West) has selected more than 75 original oil paintings that trace Smith's evolution over many decades. These depict a broad range of subjects, from landscapes and wildlife to scenes of camp and cowboy life.

Largely self-taught, Smith takes his viewers into some of the most pristine wilderness areas of the West, including his very favorite place, the Wind River Range near Jackson Hole. His relationship with the National Museum of Wildlife Art is particularly close. For example, he is one of only five artists to have participated in its annual *Western Visions Show & Sale* since that project was launched in 1987. One of Smith's earliest and most loyal collectors is the museum's founder, William Kerr, who also owns many works by the great Carl Rungius (1869–1959). Kerr notes: "Each artist, in his own way, joyfully takes us into an environment we may never be fortunate enough to travel to ourselves. Though separated by time and temperament, these artists, bonded by inspiration, have painted their responses to sights of the soul."

To be accompanied by an authoritative catalogue, the exhibition will move on to the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, Oklahoma City (September 12, 2020–January 3, 2021); National Sporting Library and Museum, Middleburg, Virginia (April 8, 2021–August 22, 2021); C.M. Russell Museum, Great Falls, Montana (September–December 2021); and Booth Western Art Museum, Cartersville, Georgia (September 11, 2021–January 2, 2022).

At the National Museum of Wildlife Art, Smith will give a public tour of his retrospective on May 22.

BEST IN THE WEST

OKLAHOMA CITY
nationalcowboymuseum.com
August 1—September 13

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum will soon host its 48th annual *Prix de West* Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale. This show's closing weekend (September 12–13) will be among the liveliest and best attended in Western art, with all eyes focused on the fixed-price sale of more than 300 paintings and sculptures made by over 95 artists.

Notable here is the sheer diversity of subjects, ranging from the customary rodeos and reservations to landscapes, wildlife, figures, and historical scenes both epic and intimate. Moreover, these are depicted in a broad array of styles and media; not surprisingly, the list of artists who have won prizes here reads like a who's who in Western art. This year the organizers are especially pleased to welcome guest artists Eric Bowman and Teresa Elliott.

Advance reservations are required for the closing weekend, which includes seminars, receptions, a live auction, the awards banquet, artist demonstrations, and a trunk show.

TIM SOLLIDAY (b. 1952), *Autumn Blankets*, 2019, oil on canvas, 30 x 36 in.

EVENTS PREVIEW

GREAT ART NATIONWIDE

THE GOLDEN STATE'S FINEST

CALIFORNIA ART CLUB'S 109TH ANNUAL GOLD MEDAL EXHIBITION

Hilbert Museum of California Art
Orange, California
californiaartclub.org and hilbertmuseum.com
May 16—June 13

ADAM MATANO (b. 1980), *Outcast*, 2019, bronze on steel base, 13 x 5 x 5 in.

The California Art Club (CAC) is bringing the 109th edition of its annual Gold Medal Exhibition to Orange County for the first time. This showing of more than 150 paintings and sculptures — ranging from landscapes and seascapes to still lifes and figurative works — will grace the Hilbert Museum of California Art at Chapman University.

The CAC calls this art "contemporary-traditional" and emphasizes the time-honored techniques used by these artists, be they well-established or up-and-coming. Although the show has no overarching theme, many of the works offer commentary on issues facing society, among them the environment and cultural diversity.

Admission is free to all, as is the series of tours with museum director Mary Platt and various exhibiting artists, plus the "paint/sculpt-out" mounted on the show's closing day. Visitors are welcome to purchase the accompanying catalogue, as well as tickets for the festive gala honoring the artists on May 30.

Established in 1909 by early California Impressionists along the banks of the Arroyo Seco, the CAC is one of the oldest, largest, and most active professional art organizations in the world. Its mission is to promote traditional fine arts in the fields of painting, drawing, and sculpture; mount exhibitions that foster greater understanding of traditional art heritage and California history; and furnish educational opportunities in the fine arts. Its members include artists, students, scholars, patrons, collectors, and members of the business community.

The Hilbert Museum opened its doors in 2016 thanks to the generosity of philanthropists and collectors Mark and Janet Hilbert of Newport Coast. The permanent collection encompasses 20th- and 21st-century oils, watercolors, and drawings depicting everyday life in the Golden State.

FLOWER POWER

IL PARADISO: WALLED GARDENS, PASTORALS, AND THE SALVATION OF NATURE

Equity Gallery
New York City
nyartistsequity.org
June 3—28

Operated by the New York Artists Equity Association, the Equity Gallery will soon deliver a blast of fresh air felt far beyond its lower Manhattan neighborhood. Its juried exhibition, *Il Paradiso: Walled Gardens, Pastorals, and the Salvation of Nature*, will feature a broad array of paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, sculpture, and mixed media works. All will foreground flowers, botanicals, and untamed wilderness, underscoring not only the joy, hope, decorative beauty, and sheer pleasure such motifs can foster, but also the more symbolist themes of longing, melancholy, fragility, and rebirth they sometimes encompass.

Gathered from artists worldwide, the submissions will be juried by Peter Gynd (artist and director of Manhattan's Lesley Heller Gallery), Margaret Krug (instructor and author of *An Artist's Handbook: Materials and Techniques*), *Fine Art Connoisseur* editor-in-chief Peter Trippi, and Jimmy Wright (artist and president of the Pastel Society of America).

JIMMY WRIGHT (b. 1944), *Flames*, 2000, pastel on paper, 41 x 29 in.

Organizer Michael Gormley, who directs the Equity Gallery, predicts this exhibition "will function as a repudiation of, commentary on, and reprieve from the follies of our current anthropocene age. Our world and our time, as did the world and its times before us, need — as the Bee Gees once sang — a bit of heaven and a lot more love. Flower art might help us all get there."

AGAINST THE ODDS

ODDS WERE AGAINST ME

Cape Ann Museum
Gloucester, Massachusetts
capeannmuseum.org
through January 3

On view now at the Cape Ann Museum is the exhibition *Odds Were Against Me*, which highlights several of the talented women artists represented in the museum's collection while also marking the centenary of American women winning the right to vote.

Diana of the Chase, a larger-than-life-size bronze sculpture by Anna Hyatt Huntington (1876–1973), anchors the exhibition. Huntington was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Alpheus Hyatt, a zoologist and paleontologist, and his wife, Audella Beebe Hyatt, a watercolorist. In 1878, the Hyatts purchased a summer house in Gloucester, where Alpheus ran a biological laboratory and school. For many years, Hyatt maintained a summer sculpture studio on this property. Though she studied under Henry H. Kitson in Boston, and later with Hermon A. MacNeil at the Art Students' League of New York, she thought of herself as self-taught, inspired primarily by her older sister Harriet, who also sculpted.

In 1902, Hyatt moved to New York City to pursue her career, traveling from there to France in 1907. By the 1910s, she had established herself as a leading American sculptor, attracting such famous commissions as *Joan of Arc* (1915–18). In 1923, she married the collector and philanthropist Archer Huntington, with whom she collaborated to create the sculpture park in South Carolina now known as Brookgreen Gardens.

ANNA HYATT HUNTINGTON (1876–1973), *Diana of the Chase*, 1922, bronze, 96 in. high, James Collection, promised gift of Janet & William Ellery James

In the Cape Ann exhibition, Huntington's *Diana of the Chase* is juxtaposed elegantly with smaller sculptures of animals created by Katharine Lane Weems (1899–1989). She was a major figure on Boston's North Shore and is best remembered today for larger-than-life-size animal pieces found around Boston, including the bronze *Dolphins of the Sea* (1979) at the New England Aquarium. Weems studied with Charles Gafly at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, then with Anna Huntington, George Demetrios, and Brenda Putnam. She maintained a home and studio in Manchester and was lifelong friends with fellow sculptor Walker Hancock.

The title of this exhibition is borrowed from that of Weems's 1985 memoir, *Odds Were Against Me*, which revealed the challenges she and other women faced. In his foreword to the book, Hancock sums it up this way: "The career of the artist was regarded as a kind of priesthood. He was expected to do with few of this world's goods and to be so dedicated to his work that no time could be wasted on such things as marriage or a 'higher education.' And he was usually a man.... A young woman entering an art class had to prove her mettle. An instructor could be forgiven for wondering whether she could 'stand the gaff,' as the expression was."

Loaned to this exhibition by the art gallery at nearby Tufts University is a full-length oil portrait of Anna Huntington working in her studio and made by Marion Boyd Allen (1876–1973), who began studying painting at the MFA School in Boston at the age of 40 and developed a robust career in the U.S. and abroad. This portrait is paired with an intimate painting of Weems made in the 1920s by the Boston and Manchester artist Charles Hopkinson (1899–1989). It has been generously loaned by the Maier Museum of Art (Lynchburg, Virginia).

Still other gifted female artists from this generation represented in *Odds Were Against Me* are Cecilia Beaux, Theresa Bernstein, and Emma Fordyce MacRae.

ANOTHER HIT OF CUTTING-EDGE REALISM

THE CREATOR AND THE MUSE

33 Contemporary Gallery
at Zhou B Art Center
Chicago
artsy.net/show/33-contemporary-the-creator-and-the-muse
May 15—July 10

The PoetsArtists community has developed an international reputation for championing adventurous — often edgy — contemporary realism of the highest quality. The organization's latest exhibition, *The Creator and the Muse*, has been organized in collaboration with Zhou B Art Center and 33 Contemporary Gallery.

Selected by co-curators Didi Menendez and Sergio Gomez, the participating artists include Tanya Atanasova, Elizabeth Barden, Joanna Barnum, Donna Bates, Michael Bergt, Kimberly Dow, Tanja Gant, Arina Gordienko, Jaq Grantford, David Kassan, Shana Levenson, Kathrin Longhurst, Ricky Mujica, Megan Elizabeth Read, Viktoria Savenkova, O'Neil Scott, Vicki Sullivan, Alessandro Tomassetti, Megan Van Groll, Michael Van Zeyl, Victor Wang, and Narelle Zeller.

ALESSANDRO TOMASSETTI (b. 1970), *Boudoir-Portrait of Tanya Atanasova*, 2020, oil on canvas, 27 1/2 x 27 1/2 in.

A NEW LOOK AT SOVIET UKRAINE

LEADERS AND THE MASSES: MEGA PAINTINGS FROM SOVIET UKRAINE

The Museum of Russian Art
Minneapolis
tmora.org
through August 30

Perhaps no foreign country has been more in U.S. news during the last five years than Ukraine, so it's timely that Minneapolis's Museum of Russian Art (TMORA) is now highlighting paintings that convey this land's complex history. On view in the exhibition *Leaders and the Masses: Mega Paintings from Soviet Ukraine* are 40 of the 111 works donated recently to TMORA from the Jurii Maniichuk and Rose Brady Collection.

Large and richly colored, these pictures were collected by Jurii Maniichuk (1955–2009), a Ukrainian who immigrated to the U.S. and then worked as a legal consultant for the World Bank in Kiev in the 1990s. By then, "Socialist Realist" scenes had been widely discredited as Soviet propaganda, even though their creators were clearly talented and often still working. Recognizing their quality and buying directly from the artists or their heirs at relatively low prices, Maniichuk assembled a collection of 140 works made in Ukraine, regardless of whether the artist's ethnic heritage was Ukrainian, Russian, Tartar, Jewish, or Moldovan. He met no official resistance

when he exported them to the U.S., though today this would be difficult.

The foremost collection of its type in the U.S., it contains portraits, still lifes, landscapes, scenes from World War II, and glimpses of daily life in Soviet Ukraine. Though many convey ideals espoused by the Communist Party, others have nothing to do with politics or ideology at all. Since inheriting the collection a decade ago, Maniichuk's American-born widow, Rose Brady, has loaned many of its works to institutions nationwide because Americans have few opportunities to see Socialist Realist art of such quality. (In addition to her major gift to TMORA, Brady has donated six paintings to the Georgia Museum of Art and pledged 11 more to Amherst College's Mead Art Museum.)

VADIM ODAINIK (1925–1984) and ZOIA ODAINIK-SAMOILENKO (1924–2002), *V. Lenin Makes a Speech on Red Square*, 1960s, oil on canvas, 47 x 79 in., Museum of Russian Art, Minneapolis, gift of the Jurii Maniichuk and Rose Brady Collection

This season, TMORA is presenting its inaugural showing from the collection, including several huge canvases not exhibited in the U.S. before. One measures a whopping 13 by 20 feet and depicts Stalin being honored at the Bolshoi Theatre on his 70th birthday. *Fine Art Connoisseur* looks forward to more such presentations in the future.

WOMEN ARTISTS HEAD TO GEORGIA

MAKING THEIR MARK: AMERICAN WOMEN ARTISTS

Booth Western Art Museum
Cartersville, Georgia
americanwomenartists.org and boothmuseum.org
May 27–August 23

The Booth Western Art Museum is set to host a juried selling exhibition of 113 paintings and sculptures created by members of American Women Artists (AWA). This nonprofit organization has members working throughout the U.S. and (increasingly) Canada, and this is the fifth show in its campaign to have 25 museum shows over the next 25 years. More than 1,500 entries were received.

The exhibition will open formally with a festive reception on May 30, and on August

22 AWA and the Booth will host a closing reception in honor of the artists.

The Booth hosted an AWA exhibition in 2014 and acquired numerous works from that

KATHY MORRIS (b. 1954), *Camouflage*, 2019, oil on panel, 24 x 18 in.

show for its permanent collection, including paintings by Krystii Melaine and Nancy Boren. Acquisitions of works by women artists are an important aspect of AWA's *25 in 25* initiative, which also addresses the relative scarcity of women artists' works in museum collections.

AWA has offered encouragement to female artists since it emerged from the *Women Artists & the West* exhibition series mounted by the Tucson Museum of Art (TMA) between 1991 and 1994. Former TMA director Robert Yassin recalls that the exhibitions' purpose was not to redefine history, but rather to provide a venue for contemporary women artists addressing Western themes. Since then, AWA has expanded beyond the Western genre to embrace both representational and abstract artists from all regions of the U.S., as well as Canada.

BY LESLIE GILBERT ELMAN

BEHINDTHESCENES

WHEN TWO DIMENSIONS BECOME THREE

TRANSFERRING PRINTED SCENES ONTO OBJECTS

For dealers in antiques and decorative arts, determining the origin and provenance of an object requires a knowledge of history, a familiarity with technique, and sometimes a capacity for old-fashioned detective work. In the case of the cabinet and bowl featured here — both recently exhibited for sale — the prints that inspired their decoration provided key clues vital to solving their mysterious backstories. The cabinet's research might be considered a straightforward investigation that involved rounding up the usual suspects. The bowl's is more of an English country-house mystery, with a colorful cast of characters and some gaps yet to be filled.

THE MADRID CABINET

The Munich-based antiques and fine art dealer Kunstkammer Georg Laue specializes

Possibly Bartholomeus Weisshaupt (active 1560–1580), *The Madrid Cabinet*, c. 1569, various native deciduous woods, inlaid and partly stained; fittings: iron, etched and fire-gilt; overall: 19 in. high, 21 1/2 in. wide, 15 3/4 in. deep, available from Kunstkammer Georg Laue, Munich/London

Inner surface of the Madrid Cabinet's lid with a depiction of architectural ruins

in objects one might have found in a 16th-century collector's "cabinet of curiosities" (*kunstkammer*). Originally these pieces were chosen by wealthy patrons not only for their beauty, but also for their uniqueness and intellectual value. Thus, the "Madrid Cabinet" that Laue exhibited at the Fall 2019 edition of *TEFAF New York* is far more than an exquisitely crafted piece of furniture. It is a tutorial in the intarsia work done by cabinetmakers in Augsburg, Germany, in the mid- to late 16th century.

Intarsia is the art of inlaying woods of different species, colors, and veining to create complex pictorial panels. It begins with a "cartoon," a drawing or print that the intarsia artist replicates with hundreds of pieces of wood chosen for their variation in appearance. Fifteenth-century Florentines elevated intarsia to an art form. Sixteenth-century Augsburg cabinetmakers made intarsia their own, developing tools and mechanical processes for cutting, shaping, and enhancing the natural shading of the wood. It was a point of pride that no paint was used to create the subtle color effects of the Augsburg intarsia panels. As a 1568 document noted: "[T]he work done by cabinetmakers earns us praise abroad...[for] how things are so sharply inlaid here, which are not possible for any painter to emulate in paints, for there are no paints as pure as wood."

Writing cabinets, with myriad drawers and compartments to hold tools and instruments made of precious metals, were a specialty of Augsburg cabinetmakers. There is a record that King Philip II of Spain ordered two such cabinets from Bartholomeus Weisshaupt, arguably the most prestigious of the Augsburg cabinetmakers. The Madrid Cabinet likely was made for another member of the Spanish court, possibly a woman. "We know that several women, including Philip's wife, Elisabeth of Valois, and his sister, Joanna of Austria, were commissioning cabinets from Weisshaupt at the time," says Dr. Virginie Spenlé of Kunstkammer Georg Laue.

In her extensive research, Spenlé found the source material prints for most of the cabinet's intarsia panels relatively easy to pinpoint, and these helped to determine the age and origin of the piece. Depictions of architectural ruins came from the 1555 "Booklet of Old Buildings" ("Buchlin von den Alten Gebeuen") published by the master draftsman Virgil Solis (1514–1562). Spenlé explains, "Solis was one of the more prolific engravers of the 16th century. If you were looking for templates [used as the basis for decoration], he's the one you'd look at first." Nuremberg-born Solis produced more than 2,000 prints, etchings, and engravings in his lifetime, including a remarkable deck of playing cards with parrots, monkeys, peacocks, and lions as the suits. His 13-page "Booklet of Old Buildings," intended for use by cabinetmakers, goldsmiths, and other decorative artists, contained versions of earlier prints by the French draftsman Jacques Androuet du Cerceau (also known as Jacobus), who had adapted them from the Flemish artist Léonard Thiry.

"Geometria et Perspectiva" by Lorenz Stör (c. 1530–1600) was another source for the Madrid Cabinet's decoration. Reputedly a student of Albrecht Dürer, Stör published this 1567 collection of woodcuts specifically for use in intarsia. A blend of mathematical precision and fantastical imagination, his work could easily be mistaken for the work of M.C. Escher — though Stör predates Escher by nearly 400 years.

Most striking are the biblical scenes depicted on the Madrid Cabinet's doors. Borrowed from a series titled "The Power of Women" and published by Dutch engraver Philips Galle around 1569, they depict Lot and his daughters (Genesis 19), Samson and Delilah (Judges 16), and a particularly startling scene of Jael slaying Sisera by hammering a tent peg through his head (Judges 4).

"The usual practice [for decorative artists] was to buy an engraving and use it again and again," Spenlé explains. Indeed, the Madrid Cabinet is quite similar to a piece known as the Milan Cabinet, now in the Princely Collections of Liechtenstein (Vaduz and Vienna). Completed around 1569, the Milan Cabinet is attributed to Weisshaupt, although several individuals would have been involved in making it. The simplest work, such as the small hidden drawers, was done by apprentices, while the more complicated drawer fronts were executed by journeyman woodworkers. The larger, elaborate surfaces went to the masters, with Weisshaupt approving the finished product.

While this array of images from nature, architecture, mythology, and the Bible might seem incongruous as decoration today, Spenlé notes, "When this cabinet was made, the client would have 'read' the iconography of the scenes quite easily." Ancient ruined buildings symbolized the impermanence of life, much like the *Vanitas* and *Memento Mori* ("remember you must die") still life paintings of the 17th century. The biblical scenes might have been cautionary tales. Images of nature and musical instruments celebrated an appreciation for beauty. Geometrical figures

PHILIPS GALLE (1537–1612), *Lot and His Daughters*, c. 1569, engraving on paper, 9 5/16 x 9 5/16 in. (sheet), Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Acquisition Fund for Prints, M25796 © President and Fellows of Harvard College ■ (RIGHT) Door with a depiction of Lot and His Daughters

(LEFT) Door with a depiction of Delilah Cutting Samson's Hair ■ **PHILIPS GALLE** (1537–1612), *Samson and Delilah*, c. 1569, engraving on paper, 9 7/16 x 9 7/16 in. (sheet), Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Acquisition Fund for Prints, M25798 © President and Fellows of Harvard College

Rear view of the door of the central compartment with a depiction of Jael Slaying Sisera ■ (LEFT) **PHILIPS GALLE** (1537–1612), *Jael Slaying Sisera*, c. 1569, engraving on paper, 9 1/4 x 9 1/4 in. (sheet), Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Acquisition Fund for Prints, M25797 © President and Fellows of Harvard College

reflected the theological concept of God as "architect of the universe." Spenlé adds, "There was no contradiction in placing religious scenes alongside mythological ones or images showing the power of nature. They were all understood to be explanations of how one should behave as a king or a prince." Or, presumably, as a noblewoman.

THE JAMES QUIN-CORIOLANUS BOWL

In 1749, a production of James Thomson's play *Coriolanus* was staged at London's Covent Garden. Sponsored by George Lyttelton, 1st Baron Lyttelton (1709–1773), it was mounted as a benefit for the family of the poet/playwright, who had died unexpectedly — and deeply in debt — the previous year, at age 47.

Perhaps more because of Thomson's popularity (he's best remembered for writing the lyrics for "Rule, Britannia!") than the quality of his last play (some admitted privately that it was dull), the production ran for nine nights and raised enough to cover Thomson's debts and leave his surviving relatives with some cash.

The title role was played by the Irish-born actor James Quin, whose personal life was as monumental as his stage presence. (It was said he had killed two men — one in a duel and the other after an argument over the pronunciation of "Cato" — and was acquitted in both trials.) Commanding and bombastic, Quin was the great theatrical star of his day. Though his career was in decline by 1749 — soon to be eclipsed by the now-better-remembered David Garrick — having Quin on the bill would have ensured a full house. According to reports, even the prologue, written by Lord Lyttelton, "so affectingly lamented the loss of that delightful bard [Thomson], that not only Mr. Quin, who spoke the lines, but almost the whole audience spontaneously burst into tears."

Shortly after the play's run, engravings were made for the London publishers Carington Bowles and B. Dickinson commemorating "Mr. Quin in the Character of Coriolanus" with the actresses Mrs. (Margaret) Woffington as Veturia and Miss (George Anne) Bellamy as Volumnia in Act V, Scene 1 of Thomson's play.

Then, as years passed, James Thomson's *Coriolanus*, its 1749 production, and even James Quin faded into history. They came back into the spotlight recently, however, when the London-based antiques dealers Cohen & Cohen, who specialize in Chinese export porcelain, came upon a punch bowl the likes of which they had never seen. Its physical characteristics showed that it had been made in China in the 18th century. Yet its decoration was unique. The source was European, the subject matter a mystery. "We had it for quite a while and didn't know what

it was," recalls William Motley of Cohen & Cohen. "I thought maybe it was Habsburg propaganda of some sort. Then someone suggested it was a scene from an opera."

This suggestion prompted Motley to consider the scene as theatrical rather than historical, and that's when the pieces began falling into place. Quite by chance, while he was scouring the print holdings of the Victoria & Albert Museum, he came upon the Carington Bowles etching of James Quin playing Coriolanus. The painting on the bowl was as faithful a representation of that print as anyone could have hoped. Finding it solved one mystery but raised another: Who invested the effort and expense to commission this bowl?

"It would have taken six months just to travel to China to place the order," Motley explains. The bowl itself would have been made at a porcelain manufactory in Jingdezhen, then shipped, undecorated, to Canton (now Guangzhou), where Europeans were permitted to enter China and conduct business. An agent representing a client in Europe would have brought source artwork (such as the Carington Bowles etching) with him to Canton and found a workshop there to make the piece.

A lengthy production period would have followed. It took special skill to adapt flat artwork to the curved surface of the bowl without distorting the image. Then decoration was applied to the porcelain, one color at a time with a firing in between. Before it was finished, a piece as singular as this punch bowl would have passed through many hands — including the hands of the Chinese children who worked as painters. A good deal more than a year would elapse before the piece found its way to a home in Europe. Motley suspects that home might have been Hagley Hall, the Palladian estate that George Lyttelton had built in Worcestershire, England. Designed by Sanderson Miller, its construction took place mainly between 1754 and 1760 and cost £25,823 (about £5.8 million today). An additional £8,000 (about £1.8 million today) was spent on its furnishings. Perhaps this bowl was among them.

George Lyttelton was a notable figure in 18th-century Britain. As Secretary to the Prince of Wales and briefly Chancellor of the Exchequer, he was regarded as a "man of letters" and patron of the arts. His close friends included Thomson and Quin, as well as the writer/politician Horace Walpole. Henry Fielding, Lyttelton's classmate at Eton College, dedicated his novel *Tom Jones* to him. Commissioning the James Quin-Coriolanus bowl to commemorate the event of which he was justly proud would have been an understandable thing for Lyttelton to do.

Alas, Motley's surmise about the punch bowl's provenance remains to be proven. A 1925 fire destroyed the library and most of the family records at Hagley Hall. If there was documentation confirming Lyttelton's Chinese order, it likely went up in smoke. This past January, the bowl was offered for sale by Cohen & Cohen at *The Winter Show* in New York. It remains available for purchase, and the search for clues continues. ●

LESLIE GILBERT ELMAN *writes about art, antiques, and travel. Her most recent piece for* Fine Art Connoisseur *was "Gabriela Gonzalez Dellosso: Interpreting 'HerStory'" in the September/October 2019 issue.*

Information: All photos of the Madrid Cabinet courtesy: Kunstkammer Georg Laue, Munich/London, kunstkammer.com. The photo of the bowl courtesy: Cohen & Cohen, London, cohenandcohen.co.uk.

(ABOVE) Carington Bowles (publisher, 1724–1793), *Mr. Quin in the Character of Coriolanus*, reissue of the version originally published c. 1749–60, etching on paper, 9 3/4 x 9 3/4 in., British Museum, London, 1868, 0822.2445 ■ (BELOW) Unattributed (China), *The James Quin-Coriolanus Bowl*, c. 1755–65, porcelain, 15 1/2 in. (diameter), available from Cohen & Cohen, London

BY DANIEL GRANT

INSIDETRACK

MAKING FACES
THE UPS AND DOWNS OF PORTRAITURE

What characterizes a great portraitist? It starts with the ability to catch a likeness, a keen sense of anatomy, and accuracy in flesh tones (for painters) or setting of the eyes (sculptors). These are art-school competencies, but there is an additional skill that differentiates the great from the good.

This is the gift for conversation. It means knowing what to say when introduced to prospective clients, then telling them what the portrait will cost without losing their commission. Later there's the dialogue to pursue if sitters feel uncomfortable being stared at, start to sag, or prove to be unlikeable. And finally, there's how to respond if they want changes made to the completed work.

On occasion you meet a portraitist out in the world — Andy Warhol often attended parties full of wealthy people and returned home with commissions — but most folks learn about portraitists through word-of-mouth. Another key method is contacting a specialist agency such as Portraits, Inc. or Portraits South. These firms present prospective clients with work samples from the artists they represent, then draw up a contract to formalize the commission. Alternatively, galleries that handle figurative art are often asked if one of their artists might be commissioned to make a portrait; these dealers then serve as intermediaries, fixing (and splitting) the price and scheduling payments, sittings, and the unveiling.

ALICE NEEL (1900–1984), *Mother and Child (Nancy and Olivia)*, 1967, oil on canvas, 39 1/4 x 36 in., collection of Diane and David Goldsmith © The Estate of Alice Neel, courtesy David Zwirner, New York

KEHINDE WILEY (b. 1977), *Barack Obama*, 2018, oil on canvas, 84 1/8 x 57 7/8 in., National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

(ABOVE) **YOUSUF KARSH** (1908–2002), *Winston Churchill*, 1941, bromide print on paper, 10 7/8 x 8 1/2 in., National Portrait Gallery, London ■ (LEFT) **PAUL EMSLEY** (b. 1947), *Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge*, 2012, oil on canvas, 45 3/8 x 38 in., National Portrait Gallery, London

A COMPLICATED TRADITION

Portraiture has a long history and was advanced enough by Aristotle's time for him to identify three categories — the idealized image, the exact likeness, and the caricature. Through the centuries, a patron's likeness might appear somewhere in a historical or religious scene, but from the Renaissance onward, portraiture became its own genre thanks to humanism's new recognition of men (and a few women) as individuals rather than merely God's creations. As artists became noted in their own right, self-portraits (and portraits of other artists) grew worthy of attention, too.

From Masaccio to Alex Katz, the roster of artists who have created portraits is long and impressive. Yet for many of these talents, there was and still is a stigma attached. John Singer Sargent, who remains best known for portraits, called them "putrids," and today some artists bristle if introduced as portraitists. For others the term smacks of commercialism, of pleasing the patron and not oneself. Brandon Brame Fortune, chief curator at the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, notes that Alice Neel "didn't think of her paintings of people as portraits, which they clearly were, because she saw portraits as something that were paid for and meant to flatter." (In fact, Neel's likenesses were seldom flattering.)

Technically, Neel was correct: portraits are paid for, and they tend to present the sitter in a positive light. That lurking perception of portraitists as second-class artists may be why Kehinde Wiley, who painted President Barack Obama to huge acclaim in 2018, "almost always says 'no'" when asked to do a portrait, according to Janine Cirincione, director of New York City's Sean Kelly Gallery, which periodically fields such requests for him. "He sees himself as a conceptual artist who happens to focus on people," she explains.

Nothing says luxury and extravagance like commissioning portraits, especially because they almost never have a resale value. Who — one might ask — wants a no-longer-needed image of someone else's ancestor or boss? There are exceptions, of course. Portraits by Sargent and Warhol trade for high prices, and what is perhaps the world's most famous artwork, Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*, is actually a portrait of the wife of a wealthy Florentine merchant (long-forgotten himself). Clearly, then, a portrait can stand on its own as art, and its subject's reputation is not necessarily essential to appreciating it.

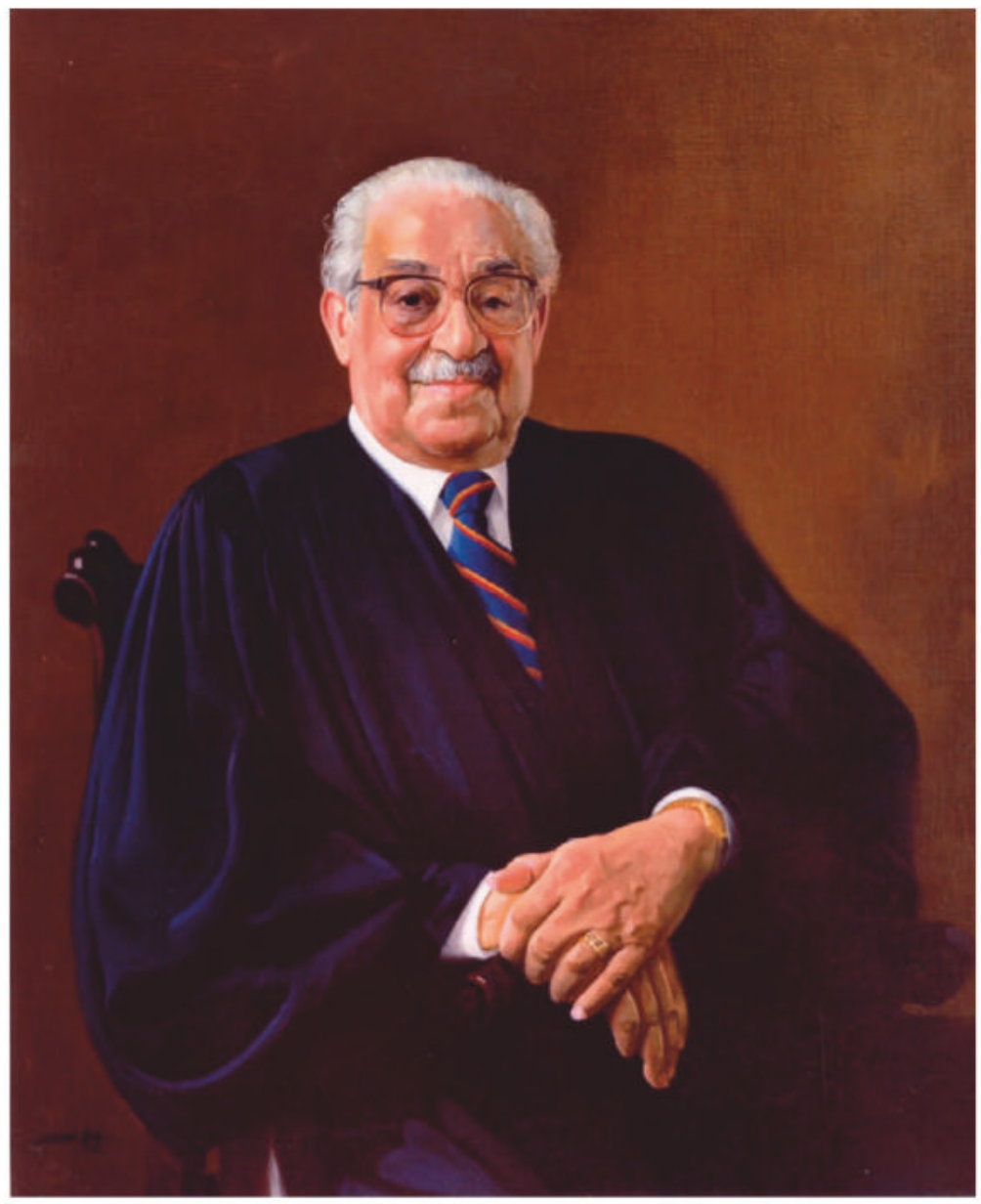
THE PROCESS BEGINS

Today, the cost of commissioning ranges widely, from several thousand dollars (pet portraits are in this tier) to several hundred thousand dollars (for large, full-figure likenesses with background imagery). Payments are usually scheduled on the basis of one-third when the contract is signed, one-third when the client approves the image halfway through the process, and the last third within 15–30 days of final delivery. (Some contracts skip the middle stage in favor of half-and-half.) Artists without representation must discuss pricing directly with prospective clients, while those who were introduced by an agency or dealer are largely spared that negotiation.

But not always. Robert A. Anderson, a 74-year-old painter in Massachusetts, gets most of his commissions through Portraits, Inc. But if someone at a party asks how much he charges, his prices (averaging $60,000 for a three-quarter-length measuring 40 x 30 inches) may make the questioner balk. "I tell them, 'If I'm not in your price range, I know a lot of portrait painters who will give you good value for what you want to spend.' That's my soft sell. It makes people feel that I am honest and not just after their money."

Once the contract is signed, the real talking begins. The Connecticut-based sculptor Marc Mellon (68) starts by discussing his process of modeling clay. He prefers a "looser" style (rougher edges) to a "tighter" one (smoother),

(LEFT) **MARC MELLON** (b. 1951), *Vice President George H. W. Bush*, 1982, bronze, 25 x 15 1/2 x 16 in. (without mount), National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. ■ (ABOVE) Marc Mellon modeling George H. W. Bush at the Vice President's House, Washington, D.C., photo © Jeffrey Jay Foxx, 1982 ■ (BELOW) **SIMMIE KNOX** (b. 1935), *The Honorable Thurgood Marshall*, 1989, oil on linen, 42 x 34 in., Supreme Court of the United States



but can accommodate the wishes of his client. Before the clay model gets cast in bronze, there is a conversation about patina, the protective coating that may be green or brown. "I send samples of different patinas to see what they prefer," Mellon notes. "Some people have opinions such as 'I want it to look like the patinas Rodin used,' but most don't really know what the differences are, so I explain the choices and how they affect the way the bust will look. They generally are appreciative of being brought into the decision-making."

A portrait isn't just a likeness, though it should look quite like the subject. It is a work of art, created by an artist and reflecting her or his sensibility and understanding of the sitter. That understanding takes time to develop and often starts before the first meeting, such as with a Google search or trip to the library. If the sitter is particularly well-known (for instance, a politician or corporate CEO), portraitists may read up in advance. Such research informs the artist's vision and gives the pair something to talk about if nothing else arises during their hours together.

The purpose of that conversation is to distract sitters from what's actually going on, from the fact that they are being stared at. This might make anyone self-conscious, especially a VIP more accustomed to being listened to than examined for skin blotches and protruding ears. In 2005, the singer Tony Bennett came for a sitting in Mellon's studio. For this occasion, the artist "upgraded my sound system, and I played the American song book, sung by people he knew." Hearing that music kept Bennett cheerful for the whole two-hour sitting. "He told me stories about this buddy, that old friend."

Edgier portraits generally reflect a stronger sense of interpretation on the artist's part. The Canadian photographer Yousuf Karsh's most famous image is a 1941 portrait of British prime minister Winston Churchill grimacing at the camera and, really, at Karsh himself. The artist later claimed that, just before

he snapped, he grabbed a cigar out of Churchill's mouth, angering him but giving him the look of determination for which he was renowned. Going further was Diane Arbus, who snapped photo after photo until her sitters lost their composure and presented an appearance far more authentic.

From a safe distance, we appreciate the bold innovations of such artists, but sometimes they are not applauded. Paul Emsley, whose likenesses of the author V.S. Naipaul and anti-apartheid activist Nelson Mandela hang in London's National Portrait Gallery, painted a 2012 portrait of Kate Middleton, the Duchess of Cambridge, whose smile more resembles a smirk. It drew withering scorn on both sides of the Atlantic, with one writer disdaining its "sepulchral gloom" and another calling it a "mawkish book illustration." It scarcely matters that the sitter's husband, Prince William, called the portrait "absolutely beautiful," an assessment with which his wife agreed. Perhaps they were just being polite?

Most portraitists prefer not to ruffle feathers. Often they are called in when a leader retires from a corporation, institution, or political post, fully aware that the new portrait will appear alongside those of his or her predecessors. It will probably be the same size, to avoid suggesting one person is more significant, and will probably look a bit like the others, too. Decades of experience may well be poured into a likeness that few viewers ever look at seriously. The late Daniel E. Greene (1934–2020), who lived just north of New York City, noted that most of his commissions "are relatively traditional, and I know exactly what to expect."

CHALLENGES GALORE

Keeping the conversation going is vital to ensuring that the result, if not an artistic breakthrough, is not a disaster. Many sitters are older people who may become sleepy when inactive for extended periods. Gilbert Stuart, renowned for his portraits of our country's first president, wrote that "a vacuity spread over [Washington's] countenance" as soon as he began to pose, so the artist sustained a steady patter to keep him alert.

In 1982, while sculpting a bust of Vice President George H. W. Bush (now at the National Portrait Gallery), Marc Mellon found that the longer his subject sat still, the more his face sagged. "Sitting for a portrait may seem like downtime to busy people," he notes. "Whatever needs to get done tends to filter up, and so you see a certain worry in the face. You see the weight the person feels he's carrying. You as a portraitist must be aware of this, because you're no longer seeing the public face, but the private one, the one Mrs. Bush may see when the vice president brushes his teeth in the morning. You have to find ways to get back to the person who is going to be portrayed." Put another way, "You want to paint not the wizened old guy in front of you, but the guy who built the company," says Jacob Collins, who charges $100,000 per portrait.

Many portraitists get their clients at the end of a tenure, when they are less energetic (and perhaps less hopeful); it is the artist's job to recapture some of the dynamism. In his first year as president, Jimmy Carter was told by the White House curator that he should have his portrait painted right away "while you are still good-looking." But like most of his predecessors, Carter waited until after he had left office, presenting a more weathered version of himself to the painter Herbert Abrams.

Parents can be difficult clients when commissioning portraits of their children. When Sargent was asked why he reworked the face of a young woman 15 times, he replied, "She had a mother." This is especially true if the portrait (of a person of any age) is posthumous. In that case, the artist works from photographs, and different survivors may have competing images they want represented in the final work. The portraitist needs to know at what age the subject will be depicted, and also what aspects are to be brought out (e.g., business suit or golf shirt?). Mellon stresses the need to determine, "from the get-go, who is approving the commission: a committee? The head of the company? The widow?"

This wisdom came to Mellon the hard way after he was asked to create an eight-foot-tall statue of Dr. Alton Oxner, commissioned posthumously by the Oxner Medical Center in New Orleans. A committee of the center's directors provided photographs of Oxner, most taken later in his life. They had approved the small- and full-size models, and Mellon was ready to cast when Mrs. Oxner unexpectedly visited his studio. Dissatisfied with the work, she asked how he had picked that pose and expression, at which point the artist showed her the photographs. "Oh, I'll give you better photographs," she

ROBERT A. ANDERSON (b. 1946), *The Rev. William Sloane Coffin, Jr.*, 1990, oil on canvas, 40 x 30 in., Timothy Dwight College, Yale University

replied, and soon supplied Mellon with pictures taken 20 years earlier. The changes required were extensive, not only to the head, "but also to the whole carriage," Mellon recalls. "A man in his 60s holds himself very differently than one in his 80s." Fortunately, "adjustments were also made in the budget" to cover the necessary time and labor.

Chit-chat, and perhaps more substantive conversation, are in the portraitist's toolkit, but sometimes the artist must do more. "Years on the job put these people through a lot of stress," says the 84-year-old Maryland painter Simmie Knox, "so I might give the person a little chin tuck or soften lines around the eyes. Clients never ask me to take pounds off, but I want to show them at their best."

The clergyman and anti-war activist William Sloane Coffin, Jr., did ask Robert A. Anderson to trim 25 pounds off him, "but he told me that, if I did so, he wouldn't embarrass me at the unveiling. True to his word, he had dropped 25 pounds by the time the portrait was unveiled." The lost-youth question comes up early in conversations Mellon has with his sitters. "I'll ask them, 'Do you want me to see you as you are now, or roll back the clock some?'" Many of his clients bring along earlier photographs and tell him they want to look like that.

Most artists are willing to make adjustments. "The client has to be happy," says Julia Baughman, executive partner of Portraits, Inc. Sometimes, though, it just doesn't work out. Andrew Wyeth's brother-in-law, Peter Hurd, painted a portrait of President Lyndon Baines Johnson, who called it "the ugliest thing I ever saw," while Graham Sutherland's vision of Churchill was never seen by the public because it was destroyed by Mrs. Churchill, who was even more incensed about it than her husband was.

AMY SHERALD (b. 1973), *Michelle LaVaughn Robinson Obama*, 2018, oil on linen, 72 1/8 x 60 1/8 in., National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

For all the good that conversation brings, it can be tricky. Daniel Greene placed a large mirror behind himself so the sitter could see what was being painted. "Watching the image develop keeps their attention and has a magical quality for them," Greene explained. However, he also learned — while painting the novelist Ayn Rand — to "limit involvement with the sitter. Explaining the process is one thing, but I don't want to debate every brushstroke," which actually took place with her on more than one occasion. Greene concluded, "I advise younger portrait artists to avoid soliciting the subject's approval during the process."

What the sitter says (about politics, for example) may not sit well with the portraitist, so the latter must respond in a way that straddles integrity and complicity. While sitting for Mellon, Bush "said he wanted to watch *Meet the Press*, and afterward we talked about environmental policy." Fortunately, the conservative vice president "responded well" to what Mellon, a liberal Democrat, had to say.

People who may seem overzealous on television may be perfectly agreeable away from the camera. Greene discovered this while painting the right-wing pundit Rush Limbaugh: during their time together "we did all we could to avoid controversial subjects." Greene did not regret the commission, a full-length portrait that was "expensive" for the sitter. But he worried about being associated with Limbaugh, and so removed the name and image from his website. For his part, Knox notes that, "I am an African-American, so some commissions I will never get, not because of my skill but because of my complexion. I understand that. If a person thinks enough of you to want you to do their portrait, you do their portrait. You are expected to rise to the occasion, even if you do not agree on many things."

NEW ENERGY

The art of American portraiture has returned to prominence recently thanks to an unexpected success. In 2018, Kehinde Wiley painted a large oil of former President Barack Obama, while Amy Sherald made one of First Lady Michelle Obama. These have drawn record crowds to the National Portrait Gallery, and so next year they will begin a five-city U.S. tour. Gallery director Kim Sajet says, "You can use these portraits as a portal to all sorts of conversations," which is exactly what the five participating museums plan to do. Princeton University Press has published a handsome, 140-page book about the project, complete with a reversible dust jacket that allows readers to choose which of the two portraits will appear on its cover.

Imaginative efforts like this — not to mention people's ageless desire to see what other people look like — suggest that portraiture is here to stay.

DANIEL GRANT *is the author of* The Business of Being an Artist *and other books published by Skyhorse Press.*

Information: portraitsinc.com; portraitsouth.com. Beginning in June 2021, the Obama portraits will visit the Art Institute of Chicago, Brooklyn Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, High Museum of Art (Atlanta), and Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. For details, see npg.si.edu. The accompanying book is ISBN 978-0-691-20328-7.

BY PETER TRIPPI

INSIDETRACK

TELLING NEW ENGLAND'S STORIES

On view near Boston from later this year through March 2021 is a unique new exhibition, *Artful Stories: Paintings from Historic New England*. Its distinctive character derives from the remarkable organization that owns all 45 of its artworks, 14 of which are illustrated here. The backstory of Historic New England (HNE) itself is intriguing and worth relaying.

William Sumner Appleton (1874–1947) was a lifelong resident of Boston and also America's first full-time professional preservationist. In 1910, he founded the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, now known as Historic New England. For the next 37 years, Appleton led and inspired the rapidly growing organization. He defined its purpose; persuaded, charmed, and occasionally hectored the membership; raised money (sometimes covering deficits from his own funds); worked without remuneration; established a sound preservation methodology; and guided the organization successfully through two world wars and the Depression. Appleton's vision has evolved into a thriving heritage organization that now welcomes over 200,000 visitors each year to 37 historic properties in five New England states.

As you might expect of an organization so old, and of a region so history-minded, many artworks and artifacts have been given to, or otherwise acquired by, HNE over the years. Most are items you would see in a historic house, including furniture, ceramics, glass, costumes, jewelry, metalwork, etc. Also gathered have been more than 6,500 works of fine art, but for decades, there has not been a suitable space in which to exhibit them in their own right. That changed in 2017, when HNE opened the 1878 Eustis Estate, a magnificent Aesthetic Movement mansion in Milton, Massachusetts, 10 miles south of Boston. On its second floor is a sequence of unfurnished bedrooms that now function as galleries for thematic exhibitions drawn from HNE's holdings or borrowed from elsewhere.

Since 2018, therefore, HNE senior curator of collections Nancy Carlisle and I have collaborated to assemble 45 paintings that normally adorn 10 of HNE's house museums or rest in its impressive storage facility in Haverhill, Massachusetts, 35 miles north of Boston. The earliest work in our show was painted in the 1730s and the latest in 2018. Many of the paintings are usually viewed from across a room, in the context of their house's particular story. By displaying them together away from those decors — with museum-style lighting, wall labels, and in-gallery informational kiosks — Carlisle and I will watch these pictures take on new meanings as they are admired up close and even perhaps "speak to" each other.

In preparation for this project, Carlisle and I reviewed hundreds of paintings before narrowing the list down to this group of 45 "top hits." It has been a pleasure to work with her while drawing upon our complementary perspectives to ensure that each painting tells an interesting story. Carlisle's expertise as a social and cultural historian specializing in New England's material culture, and my own knowledge of European art, have dovetailed to offer visitors some fresh insights.

Beyond the research we have undertaken, another joy has been watching the artworks emerge from conservation treatments that have them looking their best again. All of the paintings have been well cared for over the years, but it's only natural — especially in historic houses — that varnishes begin to yellow and nicks appear in a frame's carving. Carlisle and I have also enjoyed collaborating with HNE's educators on the handsome website for Eustis Estate that provides deeper information for both exhibition visitors and those who cannot get there in person. Its content includes historical photographs, maps, and film and audio clips. An array of lively public programs will be offered throughout the show's run, including coffees and cocktails with the curators, painting demonstrations, and a concert of American parlor songs.

Finally, visitors to Eustis Estate will enjoy the impressive display of 19th- and early 20th-century American paintings Nancy Carlisle has been acquiring for the mansion's large ground-floor rooms. All of these relate thematically to the pictures upstairs in *Artful Stories* — connections brought out in some of our website commentaries.

A REGION SEEN FROM EVERY ANGLE

"New England," wrote Nathaniel Hawthorne, "is as large a lump of earth as my heart can readily take in." Just as writers have recorded the ever-changing nature of the region and its inhabitants, so too have artists. The paintings in *Artful Stories* reflect what it is about New England that imbues it with such a unique sense of place.

These artworks have been arranged according to four themes: *Land and Sea*, *At Home in New England*, *New England's People*, and *The Wide World*. At first, Carlisle and I sought to avoid arranging the art by genres such as landscapes, seascapes, and portraits for fear of boring visitors. But to our delight, the sheer diversity of this collection has made each of the four galleries a rewarding visual experience. Works of different dates and styles are seen side by side, reminding visitors that their themes are truly timeless.

LAND AND SEA

Artists have celebrated New England's scenery for more than 200 years. In lush summer or frigid winter, they have depicted iconic scenes of majestic wilderness and well-organized farms, ordinary meadows and marshes, and towns large and small. Equally alluring has been New Englanders' close relationship with the sea. With so much wealth derived from shipping and fishing, artists' interest was inevitable.

Looming in the backstories of many paintings are the harsh realities of industrialization and urban expansion, which painters generally avoided depicting. And yet, while evading those issues, in some ways these paintings underscore them. Celebrating and preserving New England's natural beauty is of urgent concern today, a fact that makes these glimpses of the region in the past particularly meaningful.

Mount Chocorua is in the southern reaches of the White Mountains in New Hampshire. Part of the Appalachian range, these mountains were among New England's most popular tourist attractions in the 19th century. Artists flocked to the area, drawn not only to the region's beauty, but also to the camaraderie established by the painter Benjamin Champney, whose summer residence and studio in North Conway attracted many like-minded men and women.

BENJAMIN CHAMPNEY (1817–1907), *Mount Chocorua*, 1860, oil on canvas, 19 1/2 x 29 in., gift of the estate of Jane N. Grew

Born in Canada, E.M. Bannister was one of the few black artists to be widely recognized in the U.S. before 1900. Arriving to accept a prize at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, he was refused entry, but finally received the medal after fellow exhibitors protested. Bannister taught at the Rhode Island School of Design and painted local scenery using techniques of the French Barbizon school, which prioritized nature's ordinary beauties over iconic views such as Benjamin Champney's *Mount Chocorua*, illustrated above. In this scene, a woman reads while breezes flutter the leaves and grasses.

EDWARD MITCHELL BANNISTER (c. 1828–1901), *Woman Reading Under a Tree*, 1880–85, oil on canvas, 14 1/2 x 18 1/2 in., museum purchase

Artists have long admired the charm of New England's ports, often ignoring that they are also sites of labor and commerce. The son of a Gloucester sea captain, George Harvey deftly composed this scene using the strong vertical thrust of the ship's sails, which is sustained in its reflection. He married photographer Martha Hale Rogers and they spent many years in Europe before returning to the Cape Ann region. The similarity of her photographs to painted scenes like this reveals the couple's artistic affinity.

GEORGE WAINWRIGHT HARVEY (1855–1930), *Sunny Morning, Gloucester Harbor,* late 1880s, oil on canvas, 23 5/8 x 28 5/8 in., gift of the Stephen Phillips Memorial Charitable Trust for Historic Preservation

AT HOME IN NEW ENGLAND

The word "home" has complex meanings, which are expressed in different ways in the *Artful Stories* exhibition. Most familiar is the building we call home, with spaces designated for sleeping, cooking, and working or relaxing. Establishing a home is a creative act — the choices we make in designing, furnishing, and maintaining it reflect who we are and how we want others to see us. At one end of that idea is a grand room created by Henry Davis Sleeper, who built what is now Beauport, the Sleeper-McCann House in Gloucester, Massachusetts. At the other end is an anonymous woman baking in an antiquated — yet atmospheric — kitchen.

More abstract is the place we call home — be it a town, farm, or suburb. New England has many places that are multilayered: new buildings coexist with much older ones, and natural and economic factors continually reshape the landscape.

When *Country Life* magazine invited Henry Sleeper to illustrate his rooms at Beauport, he arranged to have them painted by William Ranken, a portraitist introduced to Boston society by John Singer Sargent. Ranken's view of the Chapel Chamber focuses on the important collection of silver by Paul Revere that Sleeper later donated to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Sleeper's eclectically furnished room is a masterclass in color orchestrations and contrasts of light and shadow. Note the brushstrokes that suggest sunlight on the floor, and how Ranken toned down the vivid wallpaper to retain focus on the cabinet.

WILLIAM BRUCE ELLIS RANKEN (1881–1941), *The Chapel Chamber at Beauport*, 1928, oil on paper, 34 3/8 x 25 1/2 in., gift of Constance McCann Betts, Helena Woolworth Guest, and Frasier W. McCann

While images of men working are celebrated in art history circles, in American paintings women are more often recorded at leisure. Here a woman stands before a window, leaning over a table and kneading dough. The curvature of her spine and her strong arms reflect years of hard work. Her kitchen, a room celebrated today as "the heart of the home," is clearly a work space more than a place to gather.

UNKNOWN ARTIST, ***Woman Working in a Kitchen***, **1880–1900, oil on board, 18 x 22 in., gift of the Joan Pearson Watkins Trust**

Soon after cofounding the banking firm Kidder, Peabody, & Co. in 1865, Francis Peabody moved from Boston with his family, including daughters Fannie and Lillian, seen in the foreground, to this tranquil location in Arlington, Massachusetts. The cottage at the end of the drive, built in 1843, is a distinguished example of the Gothic style widely promoted in Andrew Jackson Downing's influential book, *Cottage Residences* (1842). This painting was made early in Frank Shapleigh's career, not long after his discharge from the Union Army. Later he traveled to Europe to hone his skills.

FRANK HENRY SHAPLEIGH (1842–1906), *A Country Home*, 1866, oil on canvas, 27 1/2 x 39 1/2 in., bequest of Amelia Peabody

NEW ENGLAND'S PEOPLE

New England would not be what it is without the cultural, racial, and economic diversity of the people who have lived there. Yet not all residents have had the money, time, or connections to get their portraits painted — and thus to show us who they were. This is why most of the portraits we see today depict privileged white people.

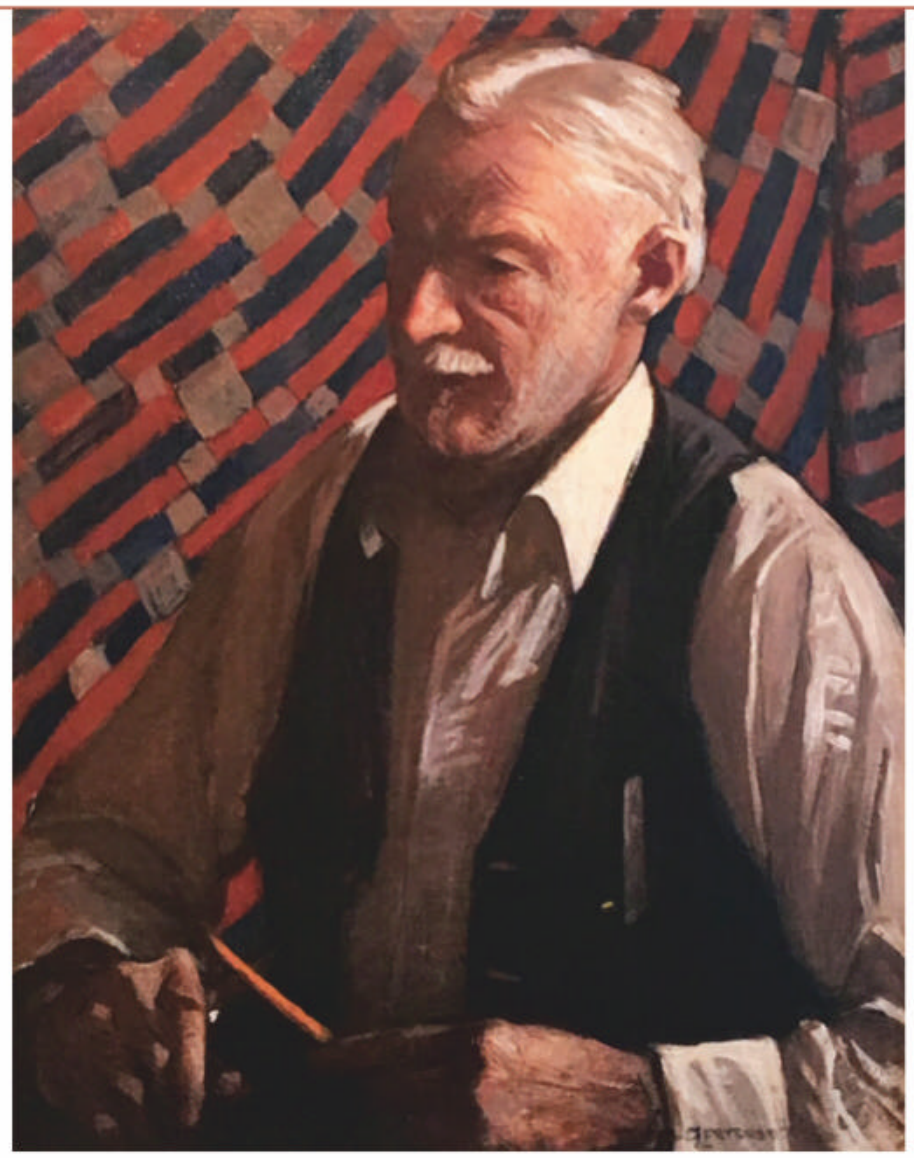
Given this reality, the likenesses in this section of *Artful Stories* are comparatively wide-ranging, recording not only the powerful but also those who worked for a living or struggled to achieve their goals. This section opens with the unexpected — an imagined portrait of a black man who escaped slavery in the 18th century. Historic New England places a high priority on acquiring and highlighting images of people who have traditionally eluded the attention of fine artists.

In the early years of the 19th century, when there were few opportunities for genteel women to earn a living, Clementina Beach and Judith Saunders ran one of New England's elite schools for girls, located in Dorchester, Massachusetts. We do not know whether grateful students commissioned this portrait from the great Gilbert Stuart or Beach commissioned it herself. In either case, it is an unusually early portrait of a woman who was painted not because of who her family was but for what she herself had achieved.

GILBERT STUART (1755–1828), *Clementina Beach* (1774–1855), 1820–25, oil on canvas, 35 1/2 x 30 3/4 in., museum purchase

In 1783, Cyrus Bruce, a formerly enslaved black man, began working for Governor John Langdon in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where he was admired for his "gentlemanly appearance." Few people in Bruce's situation were recorded for posterity, so in 2018, when Richard Haynes, an African American artist from Portsmouth, undertook a residency at Historic New England's Langdon House, he had to imagine the servant's appearance. This pose suggests Bruce's authority, and his shadow seems to move forward toward new opportunities. Yet the door knocker resembles a question mark, leading us to wonder about Bruce's fate.

RICHARD HAYNES, JR. (b. 1949), *Cyrus Bruce*, 2018, oil and wax-based crayons on paper, 39 1/4 x 29 in., gift of the artist



Gertrude Fiske enrolled in the Boston Museum School in 1904, when she was 25. Before long she was extolled in newspaper reviews, won medals at international expositions, and sold her work through one of the region's most prestigious art galleries. In this painting she posed her model against a colorful geometric backdrop — a favorite quilt she also chose when she sat for her own photograph. Depicting the model as an elderly woodworker, Fiske used a raking light to emphasize his arthritic knuckles, underscoring the character's lifetime of working with his hands.

GERTRUDE FISKE (1879–1961), ***Man Whittling***, c. 1935, oil on canvas, 36 x 29 in., museum purchase

THE WIDE WORLD

New Englanders have always looked beyond the region to engage with the world outside. One driving force has been international trade, thanks especially to New England's maritime prowess; in *Artful Stories*, this factor is glimpsed in a scene from China, where so many mercantile fortunes were made. There has also been an openness to incoming ideas and art forms, particularly through the region's many institutions of higher learning. When we factor in the growing taste for foreign travel and easier transatlantic crossings in the 19th century, this section's artworks make sense. A unique story is told on the wall that highlights the cosmopolitan family of Harvard professor Charles Eliot Norton (1827–1908). There is even a reminder that — for some New Englanders — venturing to Niagara Falls in upstate New York was also an exotic experience.

According to her biographer, Elizabeth Adams "dared to believe that a woman might dedicate her life to a profession." Born to a renowned Boston family, Adams headed to France and Italy when she was 34 and spent more than a decade there devoted to the study of art. This is Adams's copy of the self-portrait of the French court artist Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun (1755–1842) painting Queen Marie-Antoinette. Le Brun was one of the few women ever invited to contribute to the collection of artists' self-portraits at Florence's Uffizi Gallery, and her life story surely appealed to Adams, whose own artistic ambition was realized in 1885 when one of her paintings was chosen for exhibition at the Paris Salon.

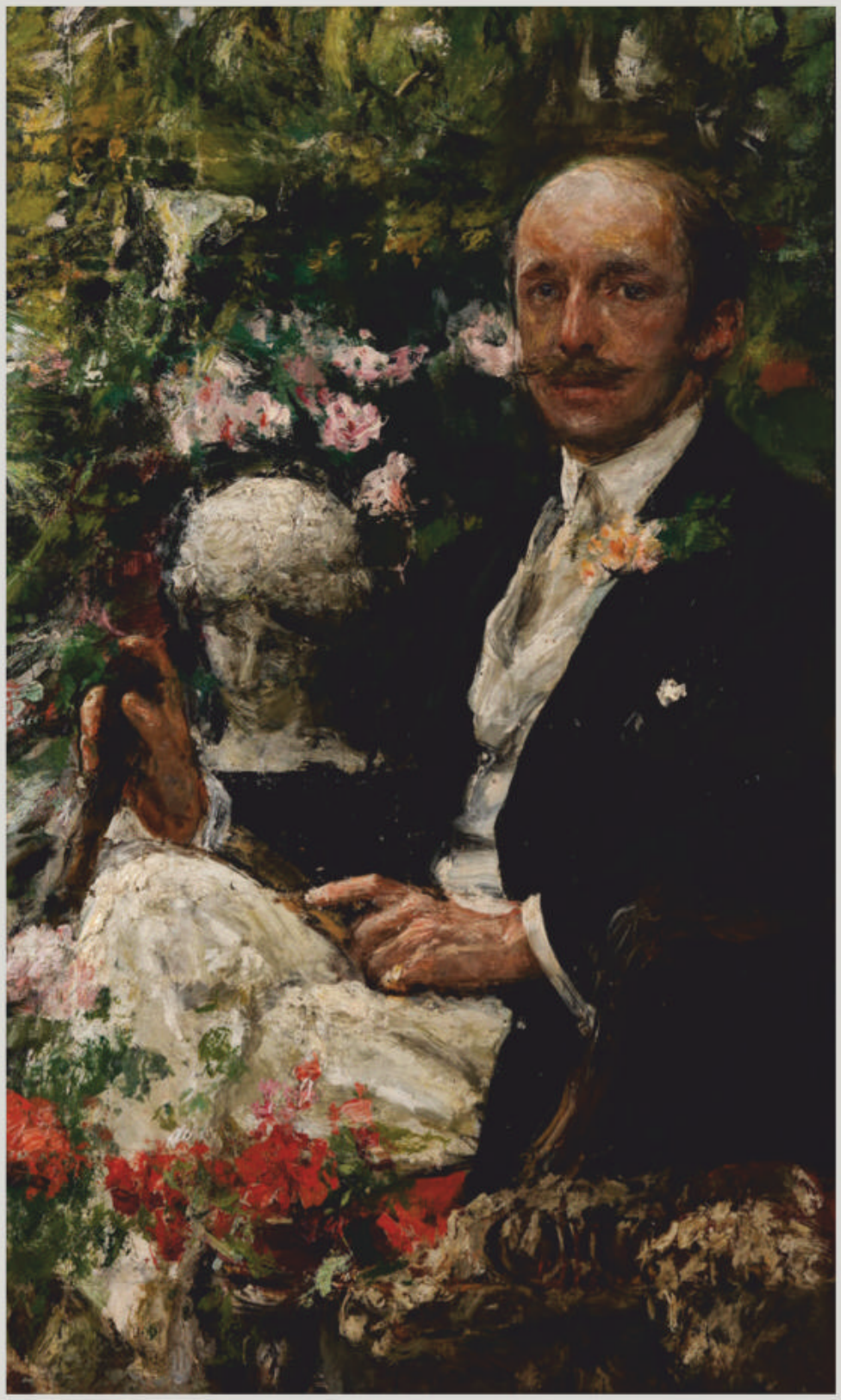
ELIZABETH ADAMS (1825–1898), ***Replica of the Self-Portrait of Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun***, 1860–74, oil on canvas, 53 5/8 x 46 in., gift of the artist's nephew, Boylston Adams Beal

After the Great Boston Fire of 1872 destroyed many of his properties, Ogden Codman Sr. (1839–1904) moved his young family to the French seaside resort of Dinard, in Brittany. There the Codmans met artist Edward Darley Boit and his family, who also had moved there from Boston. A few years later when the Codmans returned to live in Massachusetts, this painting by Boit came with them. Although a competent artist himself, Boit is best known for the famous portrait of his daughters painted in Paris by John Singer Sargent — now a beloved treasure at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

EDWARD DARLEY BOIT (1840—1915), *St. Servan Harbor*, 1882, oil on canvas, 23 x 28 1/8 in., gift of Dorothy S. F. M. Codman

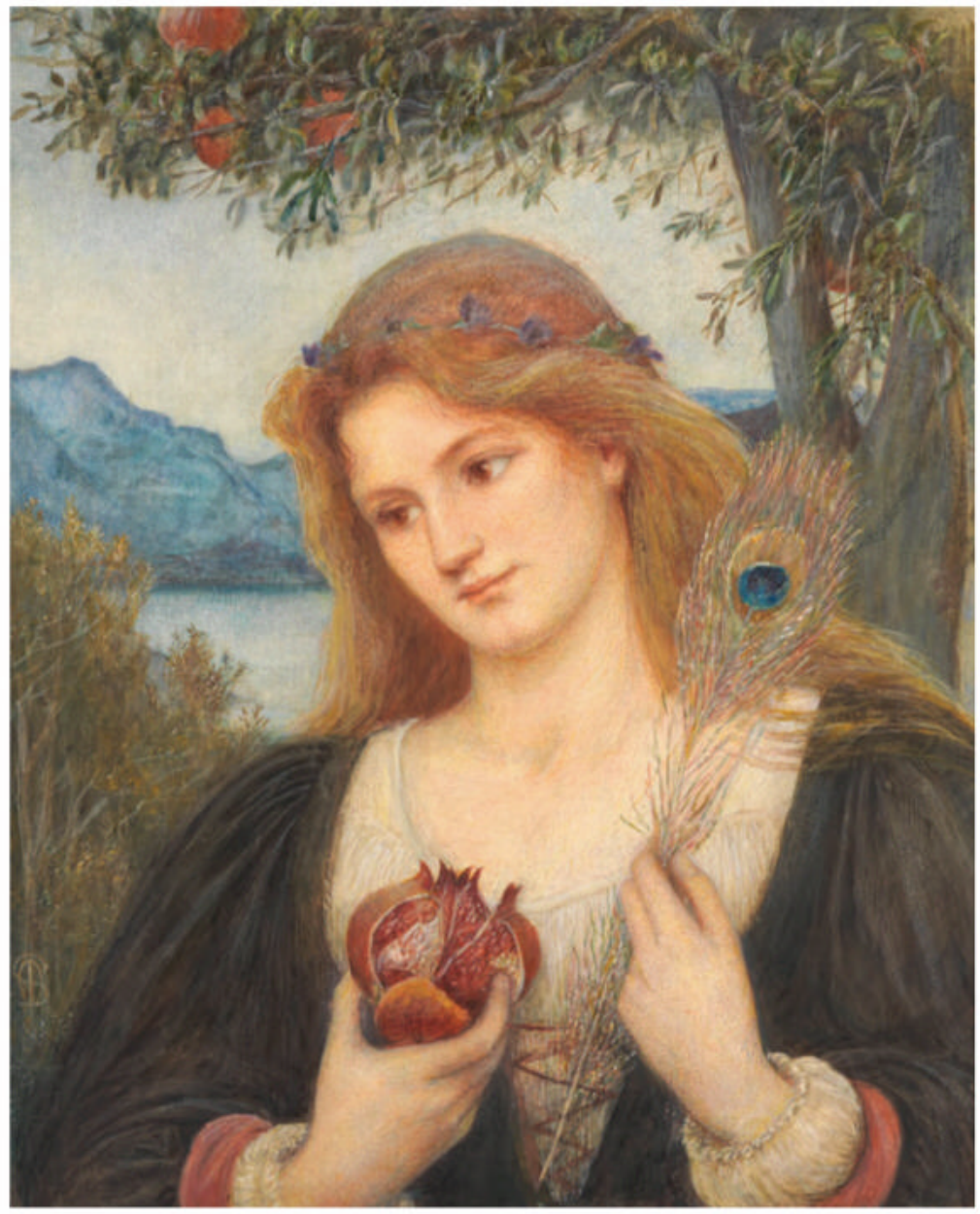
H.D. Murphy is known for quiet, almost poetic scenes that avoid strong contrasts of light and shade. After studying at Boston's Museum School and spending five years in France, he became an active member of Boston's art community. In 1908 he revisited Venice, where he made this scene highlighting the impressionistic shimmer of water. Equally admirable is the hand-carved frame. Inspired by James McNeill Whistler's belief that frames and paintings should harmonize, in 1903 Murphy co-founded the framing firm of Carrig-Rohane, named after the studio-house he created in Winchester, Massachusetts, that same year.

HERMANN DUDLEY MURPHY (1867—1945), *Venice*, c. 1908, oil on canvas, 31 1/2 x 38 5/8 in., gift of the Stephen Phillips Memorial Charitable Trust for Historic Preservation



As a son of Harvard University professor Charles Eliot Norton, Richard Norton was destined to be cosmopolitan. He was the director of the American School of Classical Studies at Rome when he commissioned this portrait. Antonio Mancini was a daring choice: the Italian artist suffered from mental illness but was championed by John Singer Sargent, who introduced him to American patrons like Isabella Stewart Gardner. Mancini's colorful scratchings on Norton's face are bold; even less conventional are the exuberant brushstrokes of lush foliage. The square impressions seen at the top left of this painting are evidence of Mancini's unique use of a perspective grid system that helped him see his sitter and canvas more clearly.

ANTONIO MANCINI (1852–1930), *Richard Norton* (1872–1918), c. 1905, oil on canvas, 47 x 31 3/4 in., bequest of Susan Norton, the sitter's daughter



This painting descended in the Norton family whose members had deep connections to European artists and intellectuals. The London-trained artist of this painting developed similar transatlantic connections when she married American journalist W. J. Stillman. After her marriage Stillman lived in Italy, where she immersed herself in Renaissance culture. She painted dreamlike images of women that epitomized her generation's notion of ideal beauty — long limbs and fingers, flowing red hair. Here her model holds a pomegranate and peacock feather, both attributes of the goddess Hera. As Hera was the patron of brides, this may have been intended as a wedding gift.

MARIE SPARTALI STILLMAN (1844–1927), *Hera*, late 1880s, watercolor, gouache, likely waterglass (sodium silicate) on paper stretched on wood panel, 28 1/4 x 24 5/8 in., bequest of Susan Norton

Information: *historicnewengland.org, eustis.estate. The texts that accompany the illustrations here were written by Nancy Carlisle and Peter Trippi. The exhibition is supported in part by Historic New England's lead sponsor Dr. Janina A. Longtine, with additional support from Jeffrey P. Beale, The Felicia Fund, Robert and Elizabeth Owens, Mrs. George Putnam, Kristin and Roger Servison, Robert Bayard Severy, and Angie and Bob Simonds. HNE also recognizes the generosity of the members of its Appleton Circle..*

PETER TRIPPI is editor-in-chief of *Fine Art Connoisseur.*

COLLECTOR SAVVY

BY KELLY COMPTON

INVENTORY YOUR ART

Even seasoned collectors may not realize how disorganized their records are. We buy art, we enjoy it, the years roll by, and suddenly we have a home full of treasures not inventoried properly. Our accountants would not let us "get away" with this if these assets were bonds, but artworks often mystify them.

For those of us who don't have a professional art adviser, now is the time to banish the disorder. Some of us are planning our estates, or documenting our possessions so the insurance company will know how much to compensate for damages after the next natural disaster. Others of us are just curious to remember exactly what we have — to go down Memory Lane and recall the moment when we acquired that special artwork.

For any of these objectives, find an easy-to-use inventory system. Artwork Archive is a Denver-based firm of artists, entrepreneurs, developers, writers, and designers collaborating since 2010 to give artists, collectors, and organizations better ways of managing their art. Led by Justin Anthony and John Feustel, this outfit launched one of the first cloud-based art inventory systems and now serves clients in 130 countries.

This initiative launched under less than ideal circumstances. When the collector Justin Anthony's basement flooded, he did not have a clear handle on which works were actually down there. While researching his options for the future, he realized that most commercially available software systems were either too costly or too complicated for a "regular person" to run. Because necessity is the mother of invention, he and John Feustel created their own, and now are marking their 10th anniversary.

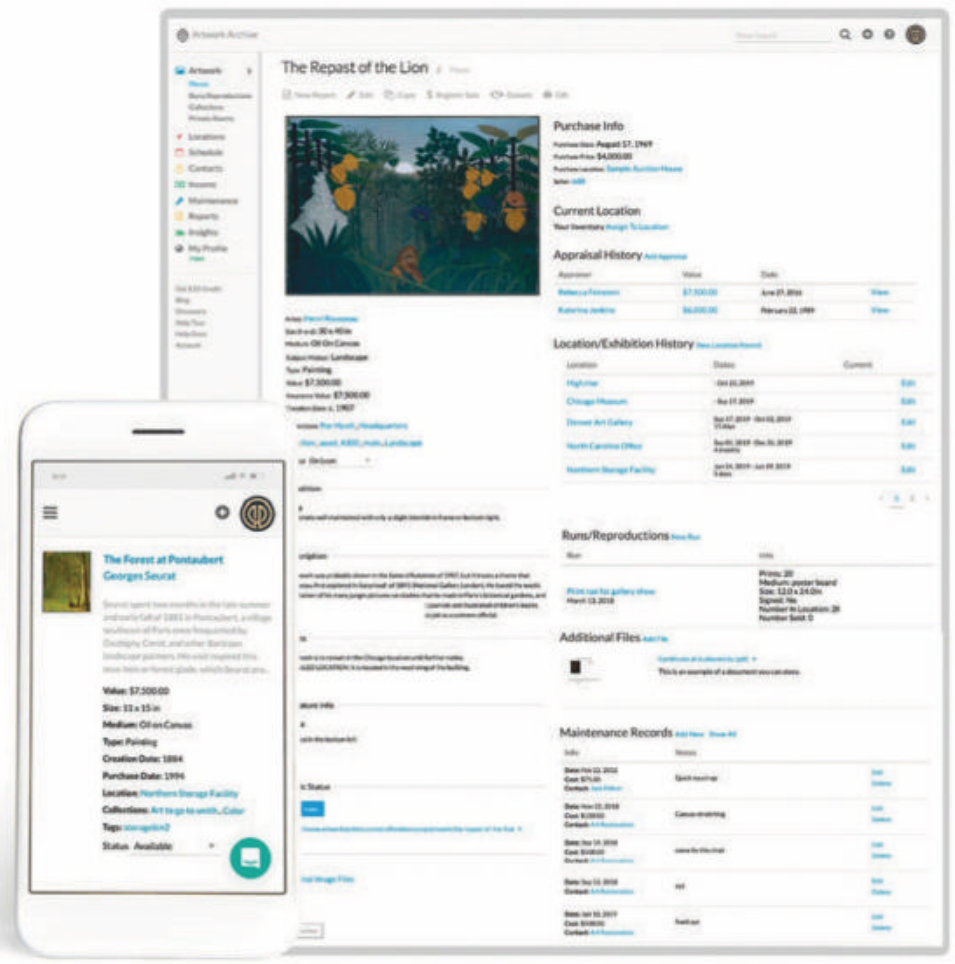
EMBRACING THE DETAILS

The most important field in any artwork's profile is its title. Once it's established, everything else falls into place: you can then input the size, materials, date, source, condition (including damage caused by the movers), and location inside your home — right down to which wall it's hanging on. The system makes it possible to scan and upload relevant documents such as purchase receipts, certificates of authenticity, and appraisal histories, and there are fields for works already sold or donated. The notes field allows users to, for example, reminisce about how the artwork was acquired.

It is easy to share all (or parts) of your Artwork Archive account with professionals who work with you. For example, the attorney handling your estate can be shown fields to do with which artworks go to which heir or museum. This is accomplished by running a customized report for him or her, or by granting access to relevant parts of the system to trusted attorneys, insurers, advisers, assistants, and dealers. These individuals can make changes or notations in your records, or they can have read-only rights.

As one should expect of any data-set software, reports can be sorted and run in various formats: lists, illustrated lookbooks, pie charts, and graphs — digitally, on paper, and for downloading to your hard drive. The system even allows you to print a customized gummed label (on Avery products) that can be adhered to the back of your artwork.

Artwork Archive users have the capacity to create private "viewing rooms" where all or some of their works can be "visited" by selected outsiders. Anthony adds that just under 10 percent of his clients take this further by creating a public profile that makes their collection searchable on Google.



A SMALL MARKETPLACE

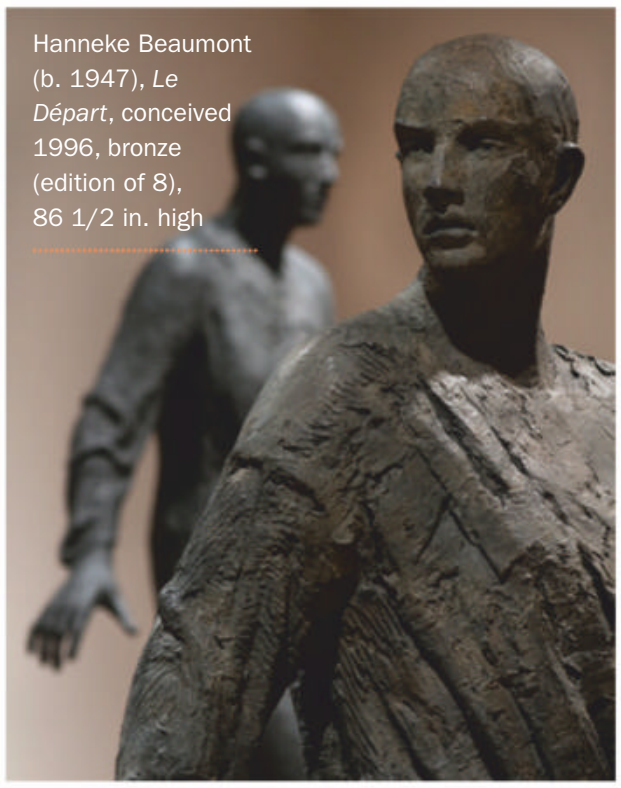
Artwork Archive is not the only firm active in this space, though it is the least expensive and most user-friendly. Large galleries, museums, artist-endowed foundations, advisers, contract registrars, and other art professionals also turn to such providers as Gallery Systems (founded in 1981), Artsystems (1989), Artlogic (1994), and Collector Systems (2003). These firms are experienced in integrating the inventory system to websites and auction consolidator databases (such as 1stdibs) and, for commercial galleries, to the tracking of which artworks are sold. These services are generally not needed by most private collectors, yet are worth knowing about.

As for pricing, Artwork Archive's service for collectors ranges from $6 per month ("starter") up to $19 per month for three users and an unlimited number of artworks ("premier"). By contrast, the cheapest of its competitors — Collector Systems — charges $85 per user per month. Unusually, Artwork Archive offers a free 30-day trial, so consider giving it a whirl. ●

Information: *Artwork Archive (artworkarchive.com). The other firms mentioned are gallerysystems.com, artsystems.com, artlogic.net, and collectorsystems.com.*

KELLY COMPTON is a contributing writer to *Fine Art Connoisseur.*

ARTISTS & GALLERIES



Hanneke Beaumont (b. 1947), *Le Départ*, conceived 1996, bronze (edition of 8), 86 1/2 in. high

London
bowmansculpture.com
through June 20

Bowman Sculpture is presenting an exhibition of recent works by the Dutch-born sculptor Hanneke Beaumont, who has won acclaim for larger-than-life-size figures in terra cotta, bronze, and iron. Their compelling immediacy is all the more remarkable given that Beaumont no longer works from live models, seeking instead to imbue the pieces with "what I feel." Dressed in nondescript clothing, these figures transcend time in order to, in her words, "represent the human being, regardless of where he's from, who he is, or what he does. I believe some feelings are universal to mankind and I wish to express these."

Columbus, Ohio
brandtrobertsgalleries.com
May 1–31

Brandt-Roberts Galleries is presenting a show of recent works created by 18 artists. Each was assigned a color described in Kassia St. Clair's book *The Secret Lives of Color* (2017), which explores the fascinating backstories of 75 different shades. For example, the painting illustrated here uses primarily "Mountbatten Pink," a tone that the artist Cody Heichel does not normally use. Heichel is one of the six artists already represented by Brandt-Roberts; another is Kendric Tonn, who created the self-portrait seen on page 114.

Cody Heichel (b. 1984), *Dusk in December, 270 Overpass*, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 48 in.

Jesse Lane (b. 1990), *Abyss*, 2019, colored pencil on board, 28 x 39 in.

Bridgehampton, Long Island
rjdgallery.com
May 23–June 22

RJD Gallery will soon open a group show titled *On the Horizon*. The artists Jesse Lane, Frank Oriti, Suzy Smith, Phillip Thomas, Alessandro Tomassetti, and Tyler Vouros are — in the words of gallery principal Richard J. Demato — "fueling the future of figurative art."

Natasha Isenhour (b. 1961), *Autumn Grass*, 2019, pastel on paper, 24 x 36 in.

Santa Fe
ventanafineart.com
June 5–15

Ventana Fine Art will present the exhibition *Earth and Sky*, which features recent works by the plein air painter Natasha Isenhour. Working on location throughout the Southwest, the artist uses oils and pastels to capture her region's unique mix of animal life, geology, flora, and ever-changing skies.

Burlingame, California
andranorrisgallery.com
May 8–July 4

Andra Norris Gallery will soon present *Her*, an Artsy online-only exhibition of recent figurative paintings by David Molesky. Working from studios in Brooklyn and Raleigh, the artist believes that, now more than ever, "society must celebrate the beauty derived from moments of solitude." The new works depict Molesky's female companion and life partner, unposed in moments of meditative commune both outdoors and indoors. Observing her body language, he translates to canvas what appear as expressions of her spiritual relationship to the larger universe. Even Molesky's technical process exemplifies mindfulness: in order to reduce the toxicity of painting in oils, he has eliminated harmful solvents by crafting his own materials from walnut oil, crushed limestone, and various pigments.

David Molesky (b. 1977), *Still Pond*, 2018, oil on panel, 16 x 12 in.

Philip Pearlstein (b. 1924), *Mickey Mouse, White House as Bird House, Male and Female Models*, 2001, oil on canvas, 60 x 72 in.

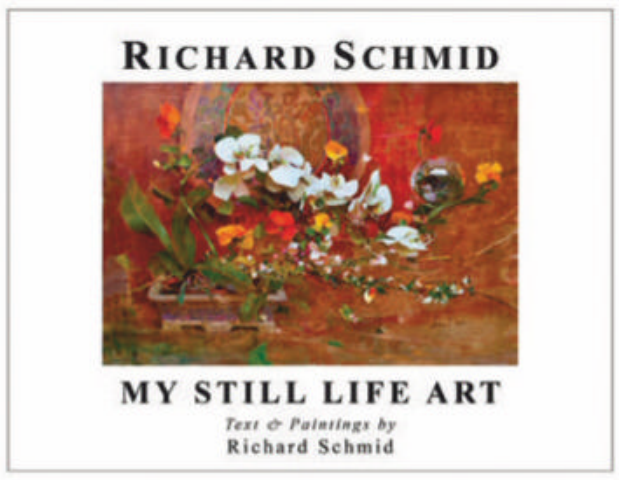
Santa Fe
lewallengalleries.com
through May 23

In the early 1960s, Philip Pearlstein reintroduced realism as a mode of modern art by treating the nude figure as a pictorial element within the overall composition, rather than as an allegorical character or symbol of beauty. Ever since, he has viewed the human form as a dynamic phenomenon of shapes, diagonals, and volumes, posing his models in compressed spaces that feature flattening electric light overhead and shadows on the white walls surrounding them.

Now LewAllenGalleries is presenting *Resilience of the Real*, an exhibition of 18 paintings created by

Pearlstein in oils and watercolors over the past 25 years. This major artist's work is rarely seen outside museums these days, so this is a rare opportunity to admire his achievements (and buy them).

BOOKS & FILMS



Stove Prairie Press recently published *My Still Life Art*, its latest large-format book about the American master painter Richard Schmid (b. 1934). As the title suggests, this handsome 280-page volume chronicles the artist's six decades of still life painting. Its 385 color images show readers these artworks in various stages of completion, along with details and Schmid's insightful reflections on his methods. The book has been published in softcover and hardcover editions.

"[The Spanish playwright] Federico García Lorca is my spiritual guide," says the Spanish-born, Dutch-based artist Lita Cabellut (b. 1961). Thus it makes sense that the Barcelona publisher Artika recently released a limited-edition project focused on Cabellut's imagery inspired by Lorca's 1933 play, *Blood Wedding*, the tempestuous story of an Andalusian wedding that ends in carnage. At the heart of this 120-page, hand-sewn book are 31 previously unpublished die-cut prints after Cabellut's figurative drawings. Each book has been numbered and signed by the artist and comes in a specially designed slipcase. Its front (illustrated here) features Cabellut's depiction of the bride, while the back shows the paint rollers the artist used to create it. Also in the slipcase is a volume of scholarly and critical essays in both Spanish and English. For details, visit artikabooks.com.

Guy Pearce as Han Van Meegeren; photo: Jack English

Based on Jonathan Lopez's memorable book (*The Man Who Made Vermeers*, 2008), *The Last Vermeer* is a new 127-minute feature film worth catching this year.

While Joseph Piller, a Dutch Jew, was fighting in the Resistance during the Second World War, the debonair aesthete Han van Meegeren was hosting hedonistic soirées and selling Dutch art treasures to Hermann Göring and other top Nazis. Following the war, Piller becomes an investigator assigned the task of redistributing stolen art, which results in van Meegeren being accused of collaboration — a crime punishable by death. With the aid of his assistant, Piller becomes increasingly convinced of Meegeren's innocence and finds himself in the unlikely position of fighting to save his life. If you guessed that the surprise ending centers on a painting by Vermeer, you would be right.

The Last Vermeer marks the directorial debut of Dan Friedkin and stars Guy Pearce (*L.A. Confidential*) as Meegeren, Claes Bang (*The Square*) as Piller, and Vicky Krieps (*Phantom Thread*) as his assistant. The film won acclaim at the Tellurude and Toronto film festivals, so Sony Picture Classics will open it first in New York City and Los Angeles, with a nationwide release to follow.
Information: thelastvermeer.com

MUSEUMS

Winslow Homer (1836–1910), *The White Rowboat, St. Johns River*, 1890, watercolor on paper, 14 x 20 in., Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens

Jacksonville, Florida
cummermuseum.org
through January 21

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens is presenting the exhibition *Eclectic Ecology: Landscape Perspectives from Ponce de León to Florida Man*. On view are 10 artworks dating from the 19th century through today, drawn primarily from the museum's collection by chief curator Holly Keris. Her goal was to examine the many ways in which artists have addressed Florida's unique combination of natural environments — from lush, bright, and sandy to murky and swampy.

James Amos Porter (1905–1970), *Self-Portrait*, 1957, oil on canvas, 30 1/16 x 22 1/8 in., National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Boca Raton, Florida
bocamuseum.org
through June 14

The Boca Raton Museum of Art is the first stop on the national tour of the exhibition *Eye to I: Self-Portraits from the National Portrait Gallery*. On view are 60 self-portraits created by some of America's leading artists between 1901 and 2015, encompassing paintings, watercolors, prints, and photographs made in a range of styles.

Among the artists represented are Thomas Hart Benton, Alexander Calder, Chuck Close, Lois Dodd, Elaine de Kooning, Edward Hopper, Jacob Lawrence, Fritz Scholder, Roger Shimomura, Edward Steichen, and even the composer George Gershwin, who was also a painter. This project has been organized by the National Portrait Gallery's chief curator, Brandon Brame Fortune, in celebration of its 50th anniversary. It is accompanied by a catalogue containing entries on nearly 150 self-portraits in the museum's collection.

Chicago
newberry.org
through July 3

The Newberry Library is presenting *Renaissance Invention*, an exhibition that explores the conception of novelty and technology through an unprecedented study of *Nova Reperta* (*New Discoveries*). This late 16th-century print series celebrated the marvels of the age, including the stirrup, the cure for syphilis, and the so-called "discovery" of America. Designed in Florence and printed in Antwerp,

Philips Galle (1537–1612) after Johannes Stradanus (1523–1605), *The Invention of the Compass*, c. 1588, engraving on paper, 8 x 10 1/2 in. (plate), Newberry Library

Nova Reperta's images spread far and wide, shaping Europeans' perceptions of the innovations that were changing their world and breeding anxiety about the future.

Co-curated by the Newberry's Suzanne Karr Schmidt and Lia Markey, this exhibition draws upon materials in their own collection as well as armor from the Art Institute of Chicago and astronomical instruments from the Adler Planetarium. Together these items transport visitors to a time of disruption and technological development that resembles ours today.

John Singer Sargent (1856–1925), *Chiron and Achilles*, 1921, oil on canvas, 137 x 125 in., Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Boston

gardnermuseum.org

through May 17

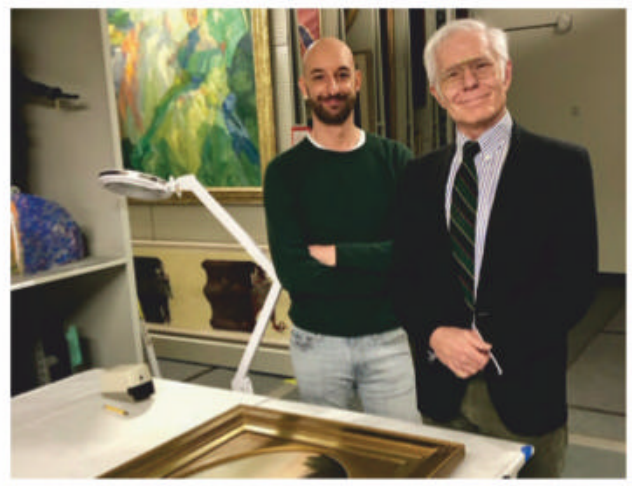
The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum is presenting the exhibition *Boston's Apollo: Thomas McKeller and John Singer Sargent*. In 1916, the famous Anglo-American artist Sargent met Thomas McKeller (1890–1962), a young African-American elevator attendant working in Boston who proceeded to pose for most of the figures — both male and female — Sargent was devising for his murals at the Museum of Fine Arts. He transformed McKeller into white gods and goddesses, creating soaring allegories of the liberal arts that celebrated the recent expansion of the city's premier museum. Sargent gave the preparatory drawings depicting McKeller to his collector friend Isabella Stewart Gardner, and now they are being displayed together for the first time at the museum she created.

OUT & ABOUT

Left to right: Marc Jacobs, Barbara Paris Gifford, Linda Zagaria, LaVon Kellner, Anna Sui, Sofia Coppola, Angela Lui; photo: Jane Kratochvil

In New York City this March, the National Arts Club presented its Medal of Honor for Fashion to Anna Sui, the Detroit-born, New York-based designer whose clothing, cosmetics, fragrances, shoes, and accessories are sold worldwide at more than 50 of her own boutiques.

Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *Sunset on the Arno*, 1831, oil on canvas, 17 3/4 x 25 in., Montclair Art Museum, New Jersey



Drs. Michele Amedei (left) and Frank Gerard Godlewski admire Cole's painting.

In March, the Italian art historian Dr. Michele Amedei visited New Jersey's Montclair Art Museum to admire a landscape painting by Thomas Cole that it will soon lend to the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. Set to open this June, the exhibition *Giuseppe Bezzuoli (1789–1855): A Master Painter of the Romantic Era* will highlight, for the first time ever, the Italian master artist with whom Cole studied in Florence in 1831–32. A section of this show will focus on the young American artists who attended Bezzuoli's classes at the Accademia di Belle Arti, among them the sculptors Horatio Greenough and Hiram Powers. Shown here are Amedei (left) and the New Jersey-based historian Frank Gerard Godlewski, who brought the Italian scholar to Llewellyn Park, a community nearby closely associated with members of the Hudson River School.

The nonprofit initiative Global Fine Art Awards will announce its latest finalists and winners during an award ceremony streamed via Facebook Live on May 11 from New York City. This event will be co-hosted by GFAA's founder Judy Holm, Dean Phelus (American Alliance of Museums), *Fine Art Connoisseur* editor-in-chief Peter Trippi, and other members of the executive committee. For details, visit globalfineartawards.org.

Founded in 1991, Tulsa's NatureWorks is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to wildlife conservation. Every year it underwrites the creation of a larger-than-life sculpture depicting a North American species. Its other primary activity is the annual NatureWorks Art Show and Sale, which saw more than 40 artists participating this March. Photos: Tracey Norvell

NatureWorks president Steve Berklacy, Art Show director Pete Messler, and artist Linda Besse

Founded in the nation's capital in 1913, the Washington Society of Landscape Painters celebrated the opening of its annual exhibition this March at Principle Gallery (Alexandria, Virginia).

Patron Rob Lyon with his wife and board member Peggy Grant, featured artist Sally Maxwell, and sculptor Jocelyn Russell

Jean Schwartz, Clint Mansell (Principle Gallery), Brenda Kidera, Christine Drewyer; photo: Tracey Norvell

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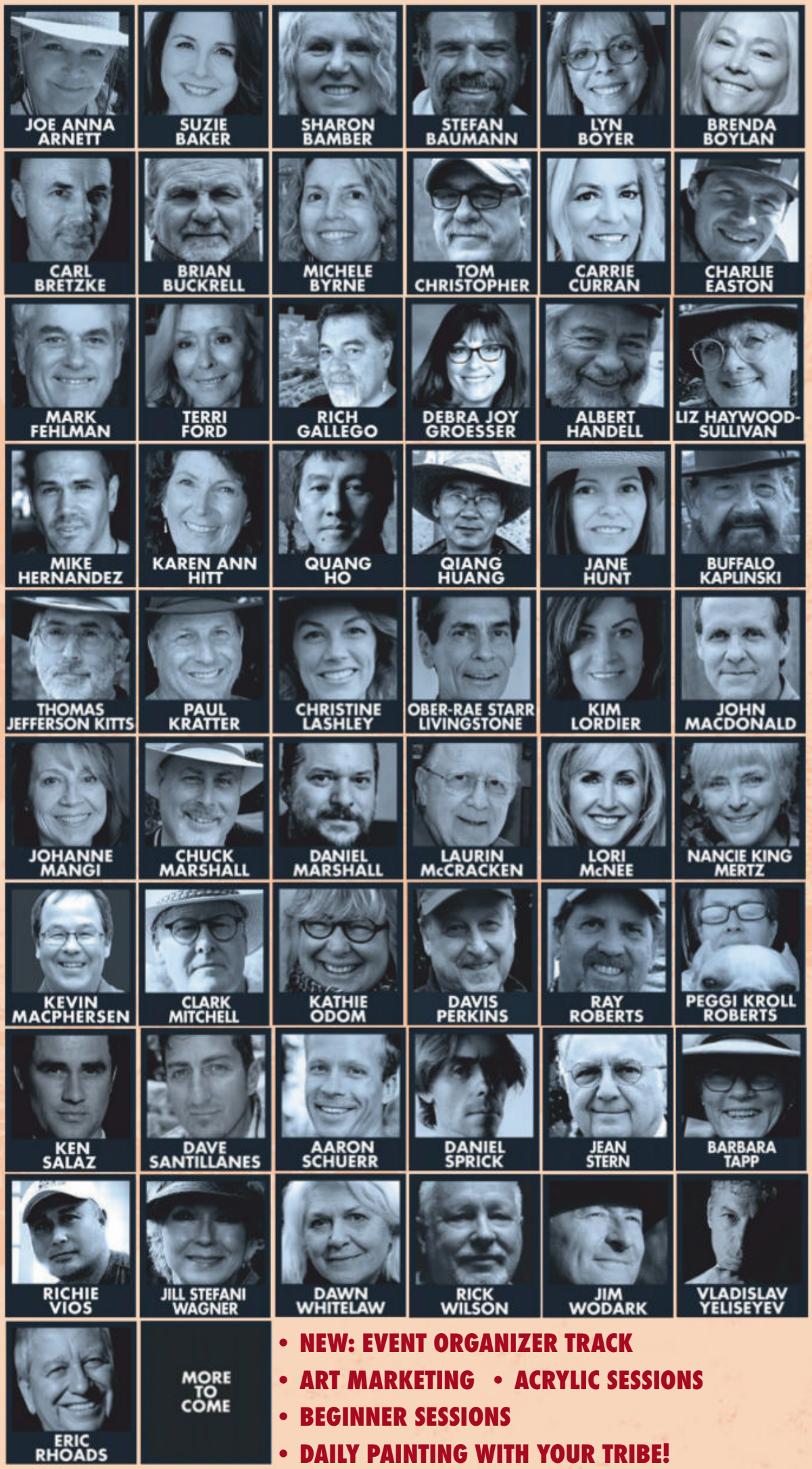

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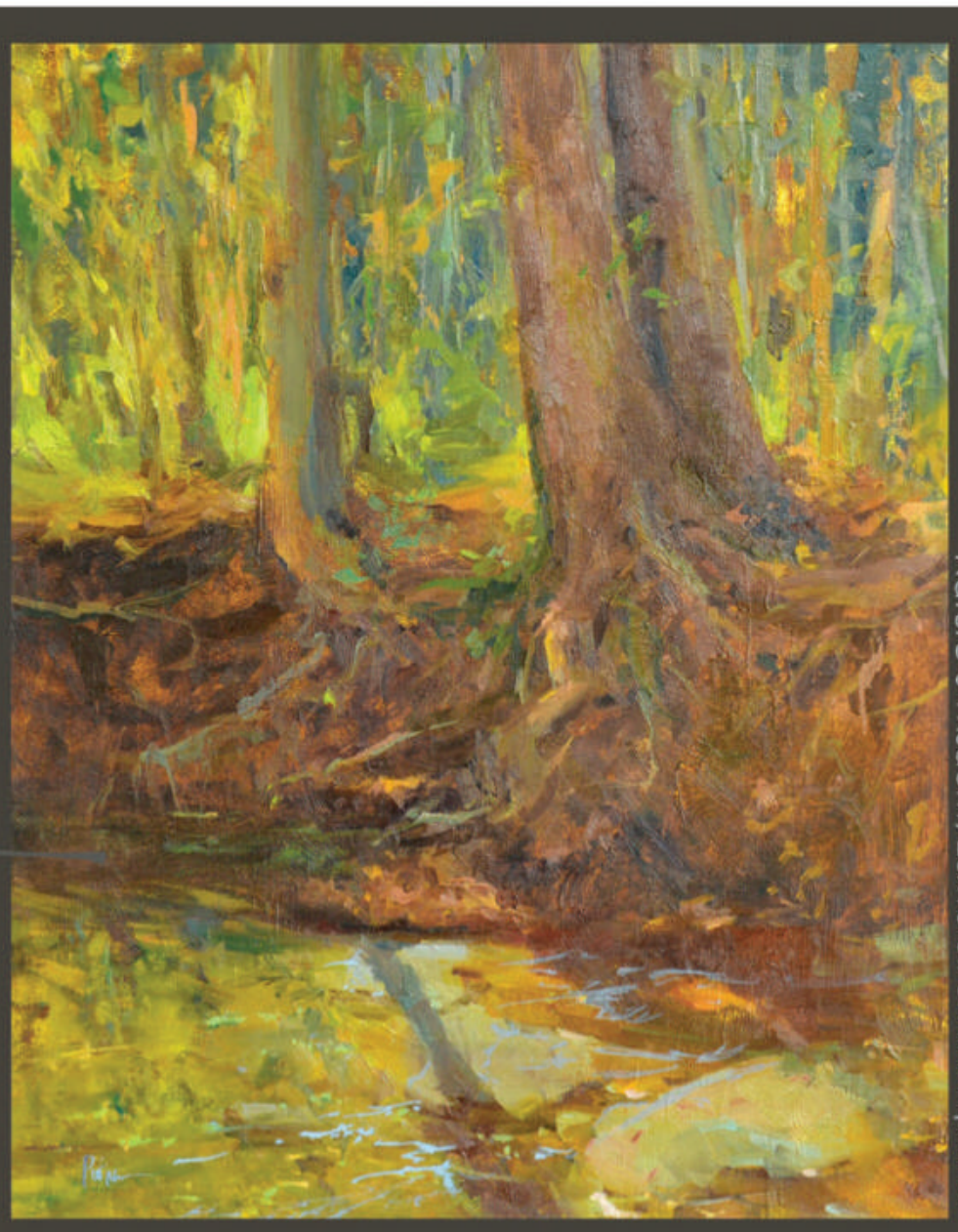


Nature's Wisdom, 20x16 oil on linen panel

WILLIAM A. SCHNEIDER

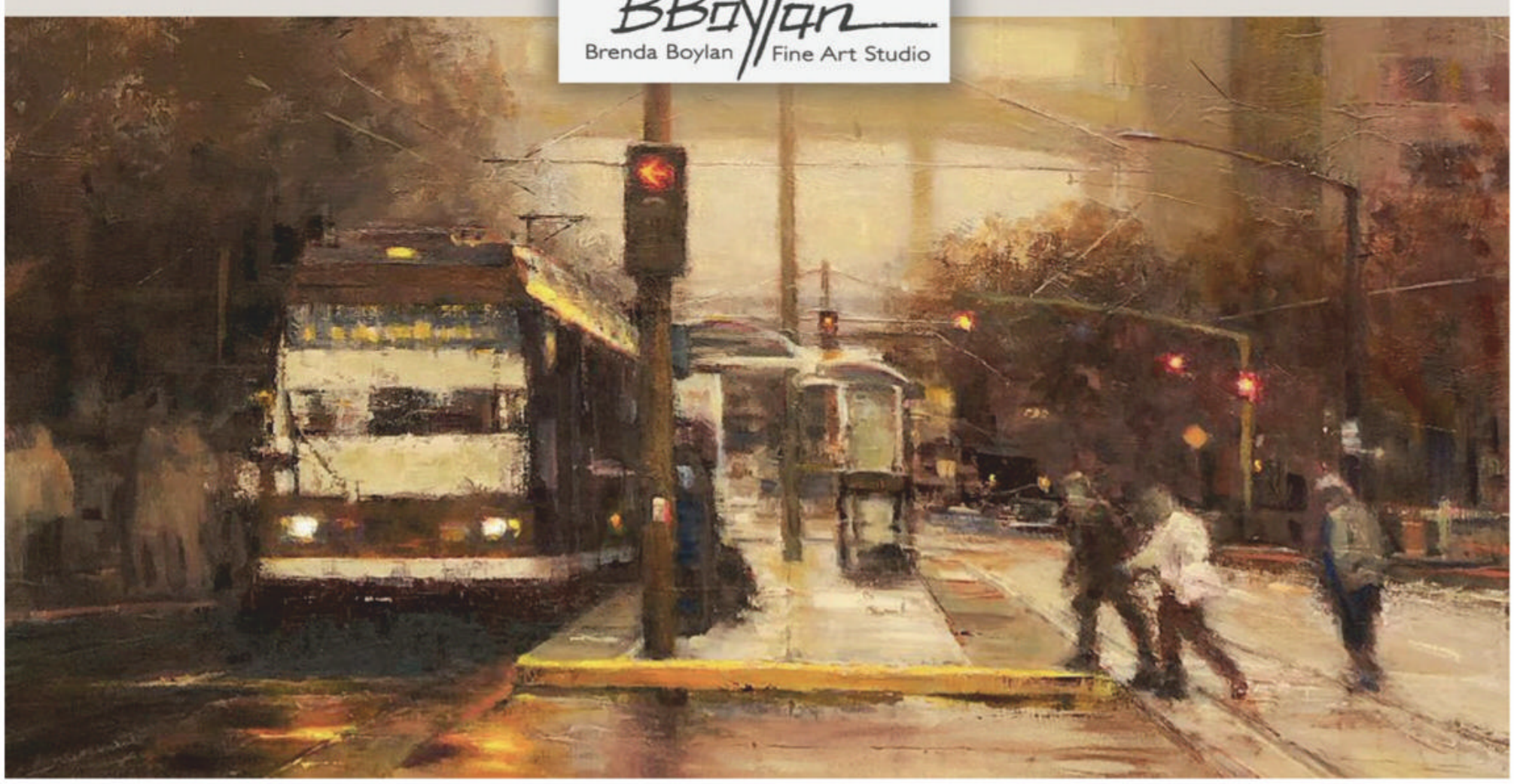
Revealing the Soul

AISM, OPAM, PSA-MP

Julie A
20 x 16, Oil on Linen

Please see website for blog and workshop information

WWW.SCHNEIDERART.COM



Red Cedars, Bent, Not Broken, oil on panel

"I'm fascinated by the tenacity and resilience of red cedars.

They grow and thrive at the edge of the marsh and shore, turning and bending with the winds and storms."

To see more visit marygilkerson.com

MARYBENTZ**GILKERSON**

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Collector and Gallery Inquiries are Welcome

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Solo Exhibition July 24 thru 30

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CHANTEL LYNN BARBER

Capturing Life in Acrylic

"My Chantel Lynn Barber painting is one of the prized jewels in my collection. The painting may be small in size, but emotionally it packs a punch. I can't walk past it without looking at it. I am constantly amazed at how Chantel can say so much with so little and do it so well. Brilliant."
David Boyd Jr.

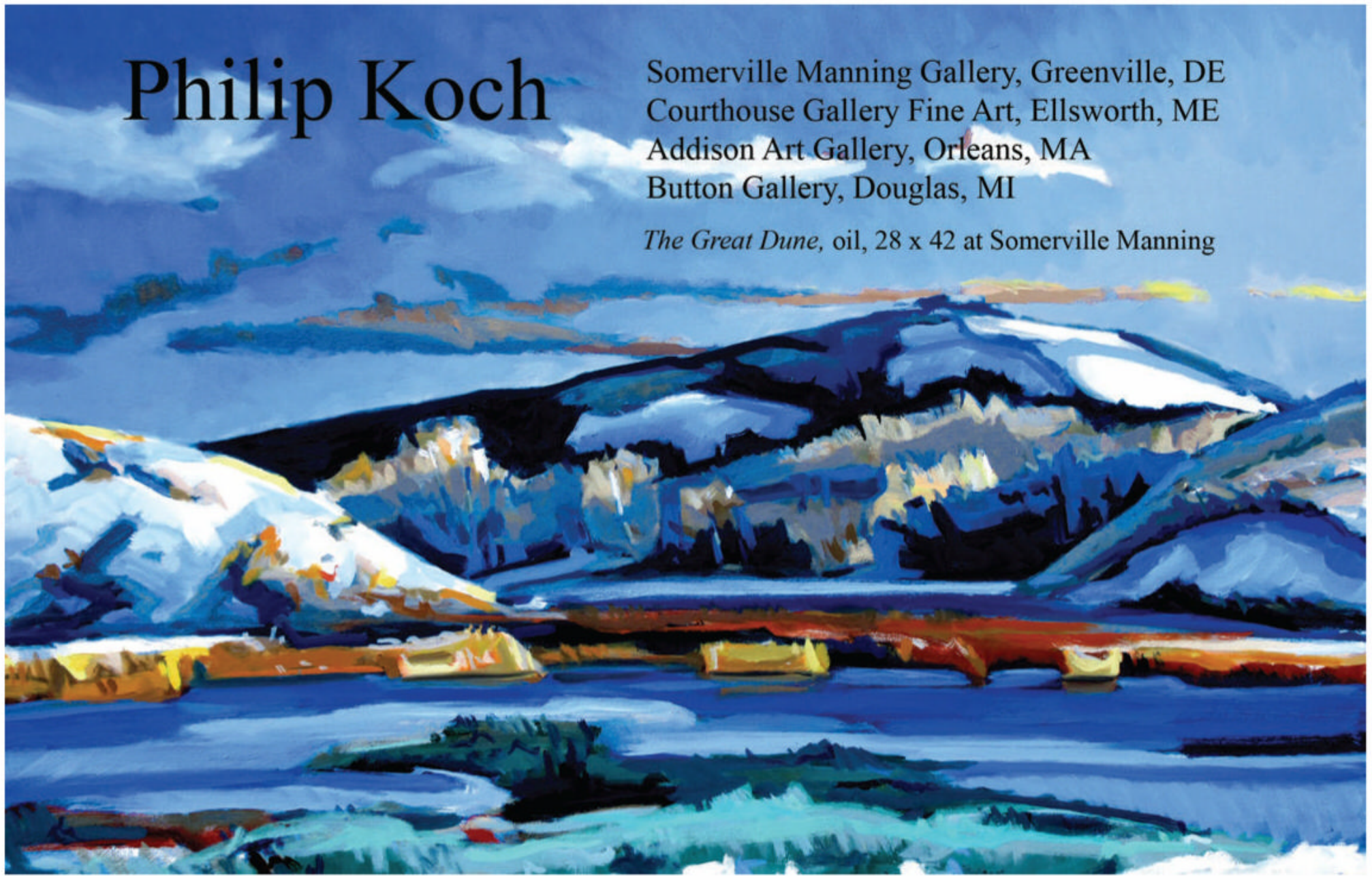
"And the Wind Lifted Her"
6x6, acrylic on panel
Available through the artist

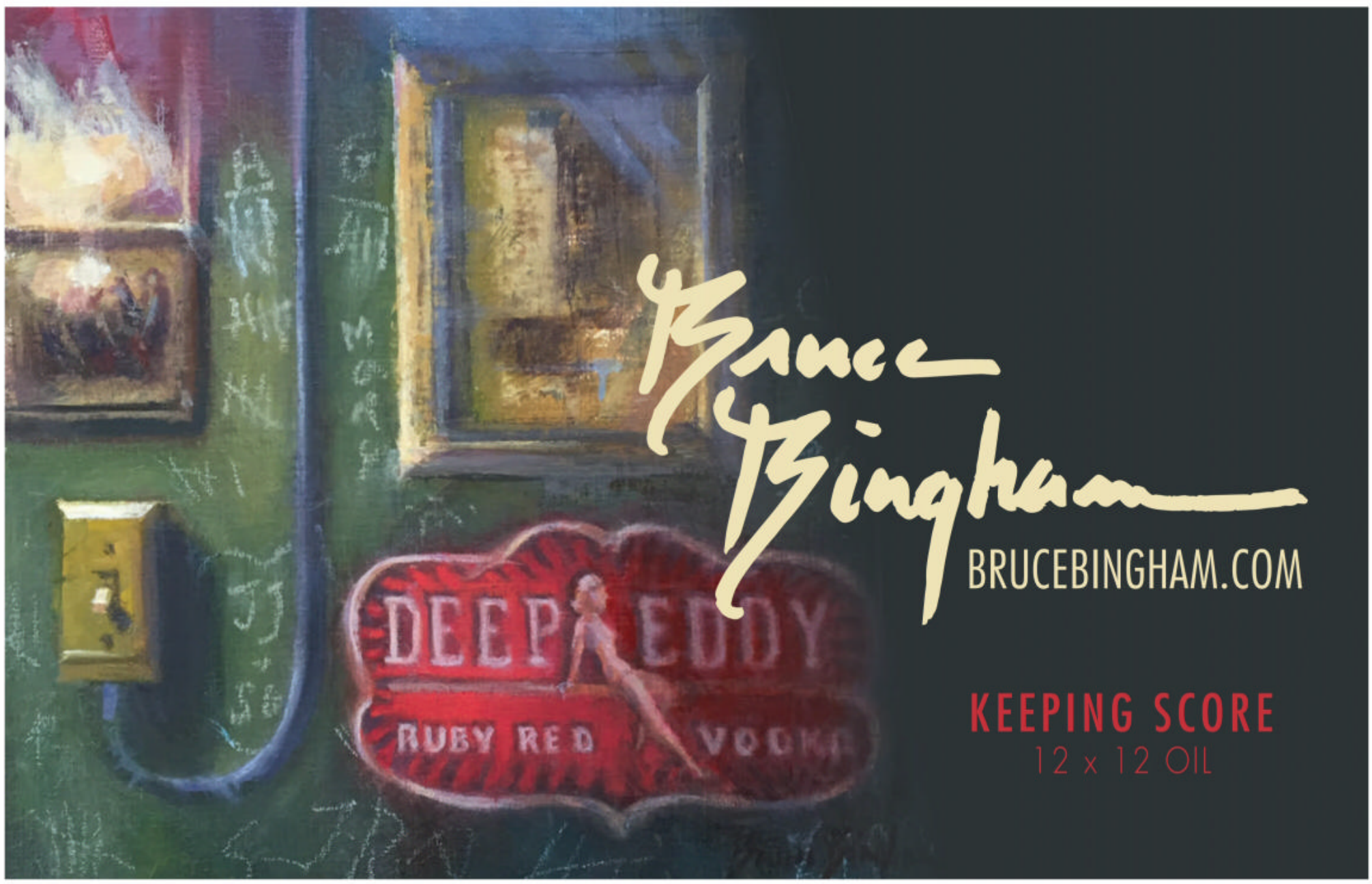
To view more of Chantel's work and for workshops:
chantellynnbarber.com | 901.438.2420

EZRA TUCKER

719·487·0648
www.ezratucker.com
ezratucker155@aol.com

Amazon Encounter 15.5"x 30" Acrylic on Board

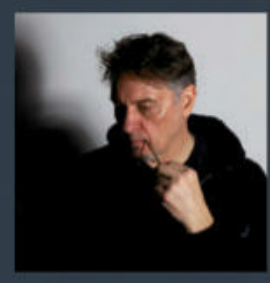




Harbor Cacophony, 16x20

Available: McBride Gallery, 215 Main Street, Annapolis MD 21401, 410-267-7077

During an early morning walk around the harbor, I was influenced by the myriad of shapes, colors, reflections, movement all happening at the same visual time and decided to capture what I was seeing and feeling on canvas.



Follow me on Instagram and Facebook

www.jrussellwells.com ▪ 847-361-5124 ▪ jrw@jrussellwells.com ▪ Studio located in: Barrington, IL

Susan McCullough

"Grain Harvest"
30x30
Oil on panel

mcsue12@gmail.com
www.susanmccullough.com

"Snoqualmie Falls" 14"x11" Oil on Board

STEPHANIE K. JOHNSON

Classically Trained
~
International Artist

For more information regarding upcoming art shows, please visit:

www.StephanieKJohnson.com

MATTHEW BIRD
FINE ART WATERCOLOR

Tidal Harvest
16 x 20 in.
23.5 x 27.5 in. framed
Available through the artist

Online gallery and
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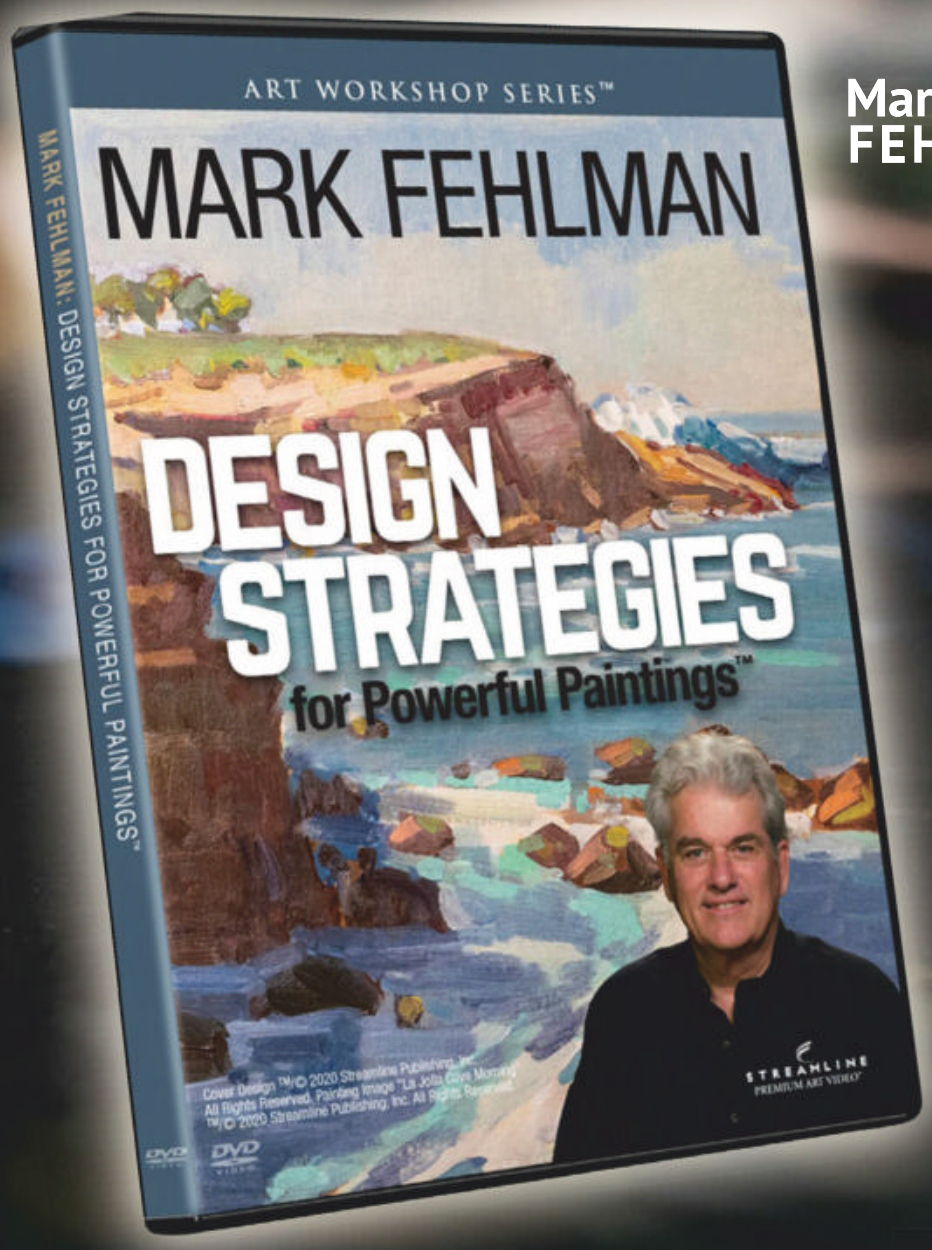
NEW WAYS TO ENHANCE YOUR PAINTING SKILLS

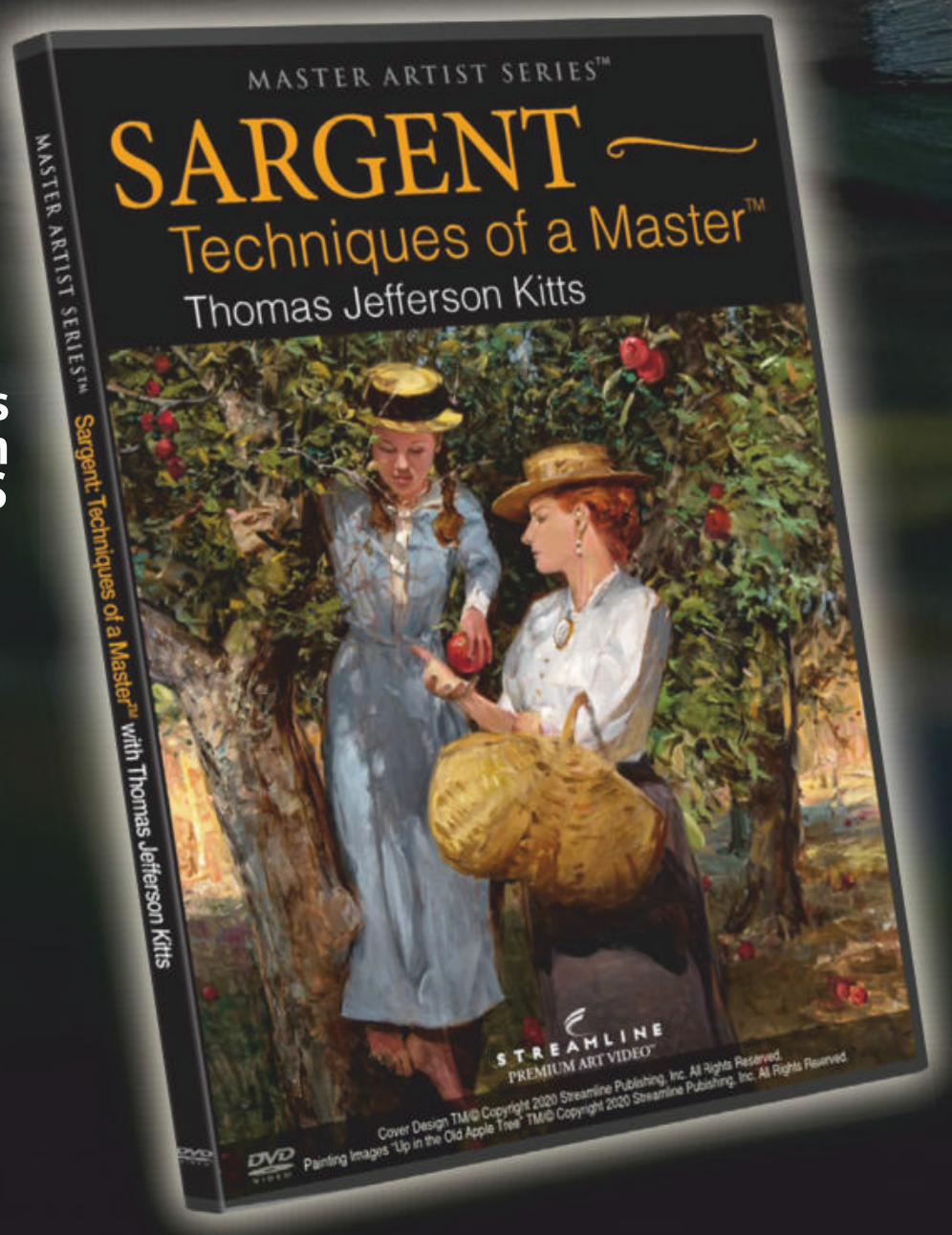


Mark FEHLMAN

Mark Fehlman will show you, from start to finish, how to visually communicate a place that is so full of beauty that you felt the call to paint it. Soon, you'll be telling a story through your art rather than just painting objects in a scene because you'll have the tools and strategies you need.

Thomas Jefferson KITTS

In this video, you'll discover compositional tips, how Sargent painted edges (which may have been linked to his eyesight), and when and when not to use texture. See how Thomas Jefferson Kitts, a modern master, applies Sargent's principles to enhance his own work — something you too can achieve.



STREAMLINE

CATHERINE KOON

OPA, CAC, LPAPA

Purple Iris 30 x 24 oil on canvas
Available through the artist

catherinekoon.com

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MOMENT

KENDRIC TONN (b. 1982), *Self-Portrait with the Fool*, 2017, oil on panel, 35 x 25 in., Brandt-Roberts Galleries, Columbus, Ohio; for details, see page 95