

IN THE ARTS

1878–1889

Society of American artists formed in reaction to old guard of the National Academy of Design

The Art Institute of Chicago founded

SETH M. VOSE OPENS GALLERY IN BOSTON (1881)

The Cincinnati Art Museum founded

Architect John Roebling's Brooklyn Bridge is completed, the greatest engineering feat of the 19th century

Mark Twain publishes *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Winslow Homer begins painting in Maine

First French Impressionist exhibition in U.S. organized by Paul Durand-Ruel, held first at the galleries of the American Art Association, later at the National Academy of Design. 290 paintings exhibited—48 by Monet and 42 by Pissarro. Because of popularity of exhibit, Durand-Ruel opens a gallery in New York

John Singer Sargent paints portrait of Isabella Stewart Gardner

Frank W. Benson and Edmund C. Tarbell join the faculty of the Museum School in Boston, soon to be one of the preeminent art schools in the country

Jean-François Millet's *The Angelus* brings \$110,000, the highest price paid at auction in the 19th century

1890–1899

Founding of Cos Cob, CT, art colony (1890), joins proliferation of art colonies lasting through 1920

Poems of Emily Dickinson and William James *Principles of Psychology* published

Claude Monet has first U.S. exhibition at St. Botolph Club in Boston

The World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago establishes public acceptance of Impressionism. Expatriates drawn back by mural commissions here

ROBERT C. VOSE (1873–1964) JOINS VOSE GALLERIES OF BOSTON (1897)

Artists Childe Hassam, John Twachtman and J. Alden Weir form "The Ten," including Tarbell, Benson, DeCamp, Metcalf, Reid, Dewing, Simmons and later Chase

Winslow Homer's *Eight Bells* brings \$4,700 at auction

1900–1913

Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959) designs Prairie Houses, setting the horizontal style for suburban housing in the 20th century

Henry James publishes *The Ambassadors*, *Wings of the Dove*, *The Golden Bowl*

Jack London publishes *The Call of the Wild*

O'Henry publishes *The Four Million*

First group exhibit by "The Eight," dubbed "Ashcan School," in New York City (1908): Henri, Sloan, Glackens, Luks, Shinn, Davies, Lawson and Prendergast introduce urban realism; show travels to Chicago and Boston

J.M.W. Turner's *Rockets and Blue Lights* brings \$129,000, establishing a new record at auction

Seth M. Vose dies. Obituary calls him "Dean of American art dealers"

Edith Wharton publishes *Ethan Frome*

Russian artist Wassily Kandinsky publishes modernist tract *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*



JJG-25 James Jeffrey Grant (1883–1960), *The Brig O'Balgownie, Aberdeen, Scotland*, Oil on canvas, 26 x 30 inches
Signed Lower Right: J. Jeffrey Grant \$32,500



34208 Richard Hayley Lever (1876–1958), *St. Ives, Cornwall, England*
Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 inches, Signed Lower Left: Hayley Lever, 1904 \$68,000

The Australian-born artist **Richard Hayley Lever** traveled abroad in 1893 to study art in Paris and London. He eventually settled in the artist colony of St. Ives in Cornwall, and his impressionist paintings of the coast brought him substantial recognition throughout Europe. In 1911 Lever relocated to New York City, reportedly at the suggestion of American painter Ernest Lawson. Both artists developed spontaneous, bold painting styles, and Lever was accepted into Lawson's circle, befriending Robert Henri, William Glackens, John Sloan and George Bellows. He exhibited with this group regularly, but eventually left New York to settle on the North Shore of Massachusetts. Even during his lifetime, major institutions began collecting Lever's work as he became a distinguished artist and contributor to major national exhibitions.

Art and Collecting in America: An Illustrated Timeline

THE RISE OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL

IN HISTORY

In 1889 Frank W. Benson and Edmund C. Tarbell, each having just returned from two years' study in Paris, took over the direction of the School of Painting at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and developed a curriculum structured upon the principles of the French academic tradition. Philip Hale joined the school in 1893, and in 1906 the younger William Paxton began teaching drawing from antique casts. A few blocks away, Ernest Lee Major and Joseph DeCamp were teaching drawing and painting at the Massachusetts Normal Art School (now the Massachusetts College of Art). These teacher/artists formed the nucleus of the Boston School, and gained national recognition for their artistic compositions of elegant women in beautifully appointed interiors. First and foremost they taught the demanding skills required to master figure painting and began to introduce impressionist elements into portraiture.

Stylistically these teachers combined contemporary trends with old master techniques. Writes Trevor Fairbrother in "History Lessons and the Boston School," *Vose ArtNotes*, 2004:

After acquiring a professional grounding in the European academic tradition these artists looked to a variety of influences in order to develop their individual styles. They selectively combined recent developments with diverse historic precedents that they learned in part by copying famous pictures on display in museums. The broad technique of certain Old Masters—Titian, Rubens, Hals, and, most importantly, Velázquez—had a powerful impact. It accompanied a new interest in pictures with simple and harmonious compositions, a trend reflecting the influence of historic Dutch painting, the recent Aesthetic Movement, and a greater knowledge of the principles of Japanese design. In addition, starting in the late 1880s, the most modern traits explored by the [Boston School teachers] had their roots in Impressionism. These varied but interrelated new approaches to painting were still deemed 'mad' by mainstream art critics on both sides of the Atlantic; they included colorism, conspicuous brushwork, and plein air effects. The daring of the young local artists paralleled the interests of Boston's savviest art collectors, who had begun to amass contemporary paintings by Claude Monet by 1889. . . In The History of American Painting [art critic Samuel] Isham pointed out that 'the homage to the eternal feminine' had a long history in Europe, then argued that the artistic worship of the 'beauty and purity of young girls' was an important, nationally relevant subject for modern Americans.



ELM-001 Ernest Lee Major (1864–1950), *Sanctuary*
Oil on canvas, 48 x 40 inches
Signed Lower Right: E. L. Major © \$28,000

1913–1916

President: Woodrow Wilson

Panama Canal completed, shortening trip from New York to San Francisco by several weeks; 8,000 miles shorter

World War I breaks out in Europe

Sinking of the *Lusitania*

Auto industry is country's sixth largest industry

1917–1920

President: Woodrow Wilson

United States declares war against Germany (1917)

World War I ends; 364,000 American casualties (1918)

Influenza epidemic kills millions in the U.S., Europe and Asia

Prohibition Amendment ratified

Portable stills available in hardware stores for \$6; prescription liquor widely available

Charles Ponzi's scheme rakes in \$15 million from 40,000 investors

Women vote for the first time (1920)

Harlem Renaissance grows

Public radio begins

STATISTICS: 1920

Population: 106,000,000

Life expectancy: male 53.6, female 54.6

Average salary: \$1,236

Unemployed: 2,000,000 (5.2%)

Inflation: 8.2%

Dow-Jones: high 100 - low 67

Consumer price index (196–100): 60

Bread: 12 cents/loaf, eggs: 68 cents/dozen

1921–1926

Presidents: Warren G. Harding, Calvin Coolidge

Hermann Rorschach devises the "ink-blot" test

Sigmund Freud publishes *Dream Psychology*

Coast to coast telephone service begins

Households with telephones: 35%, cross-country phone call: \$13.50 (1922)

The boyish shingle bob is popular among women, topped with helmet-shaped hats pulled down to the eyes

Episcopal bishops vote to eliminate "obey" from marriage vows

Post-war depression ends. Prosperity of the roaring twenties begins

Dow-Jones: high 105, low 86

Spanish art is the rage

Marathon dancing and the Charleston in vogue

Price of a Model T Ford is \$290

Teapot Dome scandal causes resignations of two cabinet officials

Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryant debate evolution versus fundamentalism at the trial of John Scopes. Scopes is convicted of teaching evolution and fined \$100

Radio audience estimated to be 50 million

First television image transmitted from London

IN THE ARTS

1913–1916

International Exhibition of Modern Art (Armory Show), first presentation of European and American post-impressionist art, starts in New York city, European portion travels to Copley Hall, Boston

Picasso and Braque experiment with cubist collage

Living in Berlin, Marsden Hartley paints *Portrait of a German Officer*

Charles and Maurice Prendergast move from Boston to New York City

Georgia O’Keeffe exhibits abstract charcoal drawings at 291 Gallery, New York

Marcel Duchamp flees Paris for New York, joined by Francis Picabia

Panama-Pacific Exhibition held in San Francisco. Boston artists sweep awards, winning 6 gold, 25 silver and 9 bronze medals for oil paintings

1917–1922

German Expressionist Franz Marc and Italian Futurist Umberto Boccioni die in the war

Artists, writers and architects in Zurich form Dada group

The final annual exhibition of the American impressionist group “The Ten” held at Montross Gallery, New York. Show travels to St. Botolph Club in Boston

Duchamp, Man Ray, and Katherine Dreier found the Societe Anonyme to promote modern art in New York

The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari opens, directed by Robert Wiene

Edith Wharton’s *Age of Innocence* wins Pulitzer Prize

1923–1926

Lincoln Memorial opens, Washington, D.C.

James Joyce’s *Ulysses* is published

Boston bans Richard Strauss’ *Salome*

D.W. Griffith directs *America*

Fernand Leger designs film *Le Ballet Mechanique*. Becomes landmark expression of machine aesthetic

Andre Breton publishes first Surrealist Manifesto in Paris

Exposition des Arts Decoratifs opens, Paris. Exhibition travels to Metropolitan Museum of Art; Art Deco style soon spreads in U.S.

John Singer Sargent dies in London

Alexander Calder begins work on *The Circus* in Paris. Has first exhibition of paintings in New York City

Charles Demuth paints *My Egypt*, which becomes icon for Precisionist movement, in which artists explore American industrial landscape in geometric style

Commissioned portraiture and figural paintings were the economic backbone of the Boston School.



34381 Leslie Prince Thompson (1880–1963), *The Chinese Coat*
Oil on canvas, 56 x 46 inches, Signed Lower Right: *Leslie P. Thompson 1923*
\$145,000



31969 Frank Weston Benson (1862–1951), *Portrait of a Lady — Mary Kemble Webb Sanders*, Oil on canvas, 43 3/4 x 36 inches
Signed Lower Left: *F. W. Benson / 1907* Price upon request

Art and Collecting in America: An Illustrated Timeline

THE RISE OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL (CONTINUED)



34513 Edmund Charles Tarbell (1862–1938), *The Dock, New Castle, New Hampshire*
Oil on canvas, 20 1/4 x 26 1/2 inches, Signed Lower Right: Edmund C. Tarbell \$195,000

Continues Fairbrother:

Idealized depictions of secular women supplanted the religious and mythological idols and goddesses that had inspired Europeans in earlier times. Even though the Boston School artists produced portraits, still lifes, and landscapes, their national reputation was founded upon images of female models artfully presented in an elegant setting.

By 1904, art critic William Howe Downes proudly reported ‘an army of professional artists’ in Boston. Indeed, artistic activity reached a zenith during the early decades of the twentieth century as Boston painters produced a distinctive body of work for its upper class, well-educated, well-traveled patrons. The unique character of Boston painting was well understood at the time. New Yorker Samuel Isham further observed, ‘...the desire for breadth, simplicity, and strong direct work ... [gives] the whole body of painting produced in Boston a distinct character of its own, which cannot be said of another American city. ... Its frankness, its directness, suggests again Winslow Homer, with more of the grace and the training of the schools, and with less of originality and elemental force.’

... The heyday of the Boston School deserves to be remembered in terms of its achievements: a love of a particular kind of painting, a desire to build on an artistic legacy, and a sensibility devoted to refinement. In principle the movement freed each artist to combine what he or she considered most admirable in the art of the past and the present.

In 1912 Tarbell and Benson both resigned from their positions, followed by Paxton in 1913. They were in disagreement with the Council of the Museum School over the appointment of a director to oversee both the School of Painting and the School of Design. Two young graduates of the Museum School took their places: Frederick Andrew Bosley and Leslie Prince Thompson, who would also resign in 1931, when the school introduced modern art into the curriculum. NAJ, MLV



34017 R.H. Ives Gammell (1893–1981), *Crows-Williamstown, MA*
Oil on masonite, 13 x 21 inches, Signed Lower Right (twice): R. H. Ives Gammell \$6,500



34017 R.H. Ives Gammell (1893–1981)
Portrait of a Lady, Charcoal on paper
23 x 27 inches, Signed lower right: R.H. Ives Gammell / 1939 \$6,500

Writes Elizabeth Ives Hunter, author of *Transcending Vision: R.H. Ives Gammell, 1893–1981*:

.....R. H. Ives Gammell (1893–1981) represents one link in a chain beginning with Jacques-Louis David and continuing through J. A. D. Ingres to his student Paul Delaroche who in turn taught Jean Leon Gérôme who was William M. Paxton’s teacher. Paxton taught Gammell with special emphasis on drawing—and in his [Gammell’s] best work, one can see the strengths of the French Academic tradition being passed down through 6 generations. Gammell’s placement of his subject’s head on the paper, the sense of lost and found and the sensitively rendered features provide definitive proof that masterful drawings were still being done in the 20th century even as the art world was exploring diverse and new forms of expression. Gammell’s extraordinary draftsmanship was a necessary element in the large allegorical work for which he is best known.

34221 Joseph Rodefer DeCamp (1858–1923)
Seated Lady in a Striped Dress, Charcoal on paper, 13 1/2 x 10 3/8 inches
Signed Lower Right: — J. De-Camp \$27,000



THE RISE OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL: FREDERICK A. BOSLEY (1881–1942)



34628 Frederick A. Bosley (1881–1942)
Miss Peggy Bush in the Blue Mandarin Coat
Oil on canvas, 38 1/4 x 45 1/4 inches
Signed Lower Right: *Frederick A Bosley, 1927* \$175,000
Original hand-carved Thulin frame

- Provenance: Estate of the artist
To Vose Galleries of Boston, 1984
To private corporate collection, Boston, Massachusetts, 1985
Private collection, Falmouth, Maine, until present
- Exhibitions: The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, “One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Annual Exhibition,” 1930
as *Portrait of Miss Bush*

Frederick Bosley’s rich figurative paintings highlight the Boston School style at its best. Carefully crafted with impressionist brushwork and a strong, yet restrained, palette, his work exhibits the strong influences of his teachers Frank Benson and Edmund Tarbell. An instructor at the Museum School himself, Bosley held the position of Director for 18 years before resigning in protest when the school turned from conservative representational painting to so-called ‘modern art’ in 1930.

Miss Peggy Bush in the Blue Mandarin Coat is a fine example of his figurative works, showing one of Bosley’s favorite models robed in Chinese attire. Miss Bush was a classmate and friend of Bosley’s daughter, Elizabeth, at the Concord School for Girls, and her elegant features are the focal point of a number of Bosley’s paintings dating after 1922, when the family purchased a home in Concord.

Art and Collecting in America: An Illustrated Timeline

THE RISE OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL: DENNIS MILLER BUNKER (1861–1890)

A Winter's Tale of Sprites and Goblins, essay by Dr. William H. Gerdtz*

[*A Winter's Tale of Sprites and Goblins*] is Dennis Bunker's largest known work and his most ambitious figure painting. Though perhaps best-known today for his innovative Impressionist landscapes painted during his last two summers, Bunker actually adopted the strategies of that movement only for his outdoor landscape work. As a figure and portrait painter, he not only remained faithful to the academic precepts he had studied abroad, but as the most influential art teacher in Boston in the mid-1880's, his impact was central to two generations of the Boston School of Figure Painting. *A Winter's Tale of Sprites and Goblins* stands at a crucial juncture in this scenario.

Bunker was born on Long Island and trained first in New York City at the Art Students League and the school of the National Academy of Design. In the autumn of 1882 he went to Paris, entering the École des Beaux-Arts and studying for a few months with Ernest Hébert, before entering the studio of Jean-Léon Gérôme, where he remained until he returned to New York, probably early in 1885. Shortly thereafter he settled in Boston, and became the instructor of the life study and portrait classes of the newly formed Cowles Art School where Bunker was in charge of teaching artistic anatomy and composition.

A Winter's Tale of Sprites and Goblins was the first significant picture that Bunker painted in his adopted city and demonstrates his mastery of academic principles which made him the ideal instructor at the school. The painting, in fact, may be thought of in part as a stirring example of Bunker's command of figural construction and anatomy, spatial structure, and tonal values of light and shade. As such, it offers evidence of the profound impact that Gérôme exercised upon Bunker, and in turn demonstrates those qualities which Bunker passed down to such students at the Cowles School as William Paxton, who continued to revere Bunker throughout his long career. However, in place of his master's preference for exotic subject matter drawn from the ancient world and



Dennis Bunker (1861–1890)
Photo from Vose Archives

from North Africa and the Near East, Bunker created an American, domestic tribute to home and hearth and the middle-class family. This corner of the living room or study is a protected sanctuary of childhood, the various children of a modern family joined together through literary stimulation, as the oldest daughter (or possibly their young mother) reads to her siblings. The presence of the doll confirms the world and the pleasures of childhood. The family is designated as unostentatious, with the young women dressed in simple white home garments, though the elegance and affluence of the household is confirmed by the lovingly painted silver and porcelain tea service.

The viewer is struck at first by the somber palette, dramatic lighting, and the grave expressions of the children, but the artist's title explains the sense of mystery and seriousness of the situation, while adding a romantic note. R.H. Ives Gammell, Bunker's early biographer, has suggested that the artist was here paying tribute to his admiration for the work of the Belgian painter, Alfred Stevens, but the simple bourgeois ambience and costumes are far from the sparkling elegance of Stevens' fashionable Parisian scenes. Rather, Bunker has here combined the academic precepts learned from Gérôme with a middle-class, New England transcription of the many scenes of peasant children listening to a reading which he would have viewed in Paris at the Salon. Indeed, during his first Salon Experience, when he would have been at his most impressionable, he would have seen Paul Hoecker's *En Hollande* and Edmond Adolphe

Rudaux's *Contes de Grand'mère*, the latter especially a harbinger of Bunker's painting.

Bunker had prepared for this elaborate composition, not only through his mastery of the figure, but through the creation of several smaller, probably figureless interiors, including the *Interior of My Studio* and *Neglected Corner*, the latter owned by the great collector, Thomas B. Clarke, and both shown in Bunker's first one-artist show held at the Noyes & Blakeslee Gallery in Boston in November of 1885 and March of 1886. *A Winter's Tale of Sprites and Goblins* is referred to, though only obliquely, in Bunker's letters to his close friend, the artist Joe Evans, with whom he shared an intense interest in theatre; Bunker understandably agonized over so elaborate and challenging a composition. On November 24, 1885, he noted to Evans that he had "commenced a picture but don't let's talk any more about it." In early December, he had shown the painting to one of the Taber brothers, a family of actors whom Evans much admired, and Bunker was gratified that Taber "seemed to think it was a good subject, which comforted me very greatly as I've a lurking fear that it is not. But Mr. T seems after all to be a man of much discrimination and I dare say his judgment in such matters is rather to be relied upon." In another letter written about the same time, Bunker confessed that his picture was "in a dreadfully bad way. I can't seem to get on with it, although I work at it all the time." Finally, on March 19, 1886, Bunker was able to tell Evans that "my picture is finished."

The picture was shown in May at the eighth annual exhibition of the Society of American Artists in New York City, held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. There it was admired by a number of critics. The writer for the *New York Herald* found the work "well painted and cleverly arranged," while the critic for the *Mail and Express* described it as "effective in arrangement and color" and the "the most elaborate genre composition" in the show, with the "group of children listening, open-eyed, with eager interest to some eerie fable." The reviewer for *Art Amateur* was reminded of the old-fashioned family group described in the *Vicar of Wakefield*; the writer for the *New York Daily Tribune* reserved his admiration for the figure of the young girl at the far left. *A Winter's Tale of Sprites and Goblins* would seem to have served as a significant influence on the work of J. Alden Weir, another Gérôme-trained artist, whose prize-winning *Idle Hours* (Metropolitan Museum of Art) of 1888, shares the aura of tranquil sanctuary, based upon the thorough, sensitive understanding and practice of academic strategies.

To date, the models utilized here have not been identified though they may well have been members of the family or friends of the artist. That the picture was not painted on commission as an informal portrait group is quite certain, for the artist offered it for sale at the exhibition of the Society of American Artists. On the other hand, it would seem to have sold quite promptly, since no other lifetime exhibitions of the work have so far been located; presumably, it entered immediately into a private collection, probably that of the Monks family who lived at 51 Commonwealth Avenue in Boston. It is surprising that *Winter's Tale of Sprites and Goblins* did not resurface in January of 1891, though the collection shown then consisted primarily of the artist's Impressionist landscapes. This picture was included in the Bunker exhibition held at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston during October, 1943, and again in the Bunker show held at the New Britain Museum of American Art in April of 1978. It remains the artist's most important figural work.



Dennis Bunker
(1861–1890)
Photo from Vose Archives



34262 Dennis Miller Bunker (1861–1890)

A Winter's Tale of Sprites and Goblins

Oil on canvas, 37 1/2 x 49 3/4 inches, Signed Lower Right: *D. M. BUNKER 1886*

Price upon request

Exhibitions:

New York, Society of American Artists, Eighth Annual Exhibition, May 1886.

Chicago, Illinois, Chicago Exposition, 1887, as *A Winter's Tale*.

Boston, Massachusetts, Museum of Fine Arts, "Dennis Miller Bunker: An Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings," October 1943, as *Interior: Reading Aloud*.

New Britain, Connecticut, The New Britain Museum of American Art, "Dennis Miller Bunker Rediscovered," April– May 1978.

New York, Davis & Long Gallery, "Dennis Miller Bunker," June 1978, as *Reading Aloud*.

Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Dennis Miller Bunker: American Impressionist," Jan. 13– June 4, 1995, illus. p. 139, no. 21, (traveled to the Terra Museum of American Art, July 1– Sept. 24, 1995, and the Denver Art Museum, Oct.– Dec. 1995).

Ogunquit, Maine, Ogunquit Museum of American Art, "Painted Air: American Impressionism," Aug. 14– Oct. 15, 2000.

Roanoke, Virginia, Art Museum of Western Virginia, "The Age of Innocence: American Paintings 1870–1920," June 6– July 20, 2003.

Literature:

R. H. I. Gammell, *Dennis Miller Bunker*, New York, 1953, p. 49, illus. as *Reading Aloud*.

Erica E. Hirshler, *Dennis Miller Bunker, American Impressionist*, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 1995.

*Dr. William H. Gerds is one of the foremost art historians of American paintings and sculpture from the 18th and 19th centuries. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1966, and recalls his many meetings with Robert C. Vose, Jr :

....And there was Bob Vose, at the Vose Galleries in Boston. Bob was my true teacher in American art history. I early on started visiting his gallery, and almost every week Bob would take an hour or two to show me the latest wares, which in those days came and went frequently so that each visit there was an abundance of new material which he discussed with me, revealing the fine points of stylistic identification, elaborating on matters of quality, and teaching me the historical significance of each work, within the oeuvre of each artist, the period in which it was created, and its reflection of American art patronage.¹

¹William Gerds, "A Personal Recollection," *For Beauty and for Truth* (Amherst, MA: Mead Art Museum, 1998); p. 7.

Art and Collecting in America: An Illustrated Timeline

CARVING OUT A PROFESSIONAL LIFE: THE STORIES OF THREE GENERATIONS OF WOMEN ARTISTS

By Marcia L. Vose



34503 Mary Bradish Titcomb (1858–1927), *Marblehead, MA*
Oil on canvas, 17 x 21 inches, Signed Lower Right: *Titcomb*
Circa 1905 \$32,500

Mary Bradish Titcomb apparently decided early on that she would have a professional career. She taught art in the public school systems for over twenty-five years until she made the daring decision to make her living as a working artist. After graduating from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in 1909, where she had studied for seven years, Titcomb lived and worked in the Grundmann Studios building in Boston, an unusual choice, but one that was gaining respectability for a woman of her social standing. In fact, one writer referred to the Grundmann as “the haunt and home of a little colony of women artists.”¹ Supported by the camaraderie that emerged, Titcomb established herself as an award winning artist and exhibited widely at the national annuals. The pinnacle of her career occurred when President Woodrow Wilson bought her painting, *Portrait of Geraldine J.*, at the Corcoran Museum’s annual in 1915.

Gertrude Fiske, a generation younger than Titcomb, still faced the notion that career and marriage could not be successfully mixed, and she too remained single. After giving women the vote in 1920, however, subtle changes developed in acceptable roles for women. The antiquated notion that women were mentally and physically inferior was disproved, and the vision of elegantly clothed women idly passing time was displaced by increasing numbers of women joining the work force. Fiske finished her seven-year period of training at the Museum School in 1911, but her art developed in a different direction after study with Charles Woodbury. Although she was best known as a figure painter, she began to make a number of innovative landscapes that the press heralded as original and adventurous in spirit. 1930 was a banner year for Fiske; she became the first female member of the State Art Association and a full member of the prestigious National Academy of Design.

Lilian Westcott Hale, a contemporary of Gertrude Fiske, also vowed to devote herself to making art. Despite her plans, she fell in love with her painting and drawing instructor at the Museum School, Philip L. Hale (1865–1931), who was eighteen years her senior. Art historian Erica Hirshler described her dilemma in the catalogue to her 2001 exhibition, *A Studio of Her Own, Women Artists in Boston, 1870–1940*:

[Lilian] Westcott expressed her quandary to her sister, who responded that ‘Mr. Hale seems a man very congenial in his tastes to yours, and I do not see why [by] loving and marrying him you would break your vow of everlasting faithfulness to your work.

¹ “Grundman Studios”, *Providence Sunday Journal*. December 11. 1909. P. 14, as quoted by Nancy Allyn Jarzombek, *Mary Bradish Titcomb and her Contemporaries*, Vose Galleries of Boston, 1998, p. 29

Mary Bradish Titcomb (1858–1927)
Gertrude Fiske (1878–1961)
Lilian Westcott Hale (1881–1963)
Polly Thayer Starr (1904–2006)

The independence of New England women was well known in the nineteenth century through the suffrage movement—think Julia Ward Howe, Susan B. Anthony, Lucy Stone—and through nineteenth and early twentieth century feminist literature. Yet women who wanted to pursue professional careers as artists were torn between the demands of a career and the responsibilities of marriage. Society cautioned that women were fragile and mentally inferior to men, and scorned women who traveled alone or who attempted anything outside the confines of hearth and home. The right to vote, however, became a rallying cry in the quest to gain more independence for women.

Women who hoped to become professional artists around the turn of the century were presented with two choices. They could marry, devote themselves solely to domestic tasks and abandon their artistic dreams. Or they could shun married life in order to prove themselves professional painters, not the socially acceptable amateur dabblers who populated the art schools.



32056 Gertrude Fiske (1878–1961), *Ann and Teresa*
Oil on canvas, 28 x 22 inches, Signed Lower Left: *Gertrude Fiske* \$39,500

Lilian did marry Philip Hale, and the two established separate studios in the Fenway Studios building, erected in 1905. After she gave birth to her daughter, Nancy, in 1908, the family moved to the suburban community of Dedham, MA, where she maintained a studio, allowing her to be home with her child while pursuing her art. *Spring by the Wayside* is a view painted from the window of her Dedham house on Highland Avenue. With the steady encouragement of her artist/husband, Lilian Hale became a leading painter in Boston art circles and was greatly in demand as a portraitist. She had it all—career and family—and was one of the few women able to balance the demands of each.

Polly Thayer, a later pupil of Philip Hale in the 1920s, found the Boston School to be “a bit of a backwater.”² She honed her drawing skills with Hale, then set out to study with Charles Hawthorne in Provincetown, MA, where she developed a high-key palette and became familiar with the use of paint texture. Throughout her early life she traveled and studied art extensively, immersing herself in the myriad influences found in Paris, Italy, Morocco and Spain. By the time she was twenty-six, she had received the prestigious Hallgarten Prize from the National Academy of Design for *Circles* (now in the New Britain Museum of Art), and a gold medal from the Boston Tercentenary Exhibition for her self-portrait *Interval*. Thayer’s biographer, Dorothy Koval, writes, “In that same year [1930] her first solo exhibition opened at Doll and Richards Gallery in Boston. One reviewer declared that it ‘surely settles her status as one of the foremost painters in the country, especially notable in portrait painting but evidently gifted with that kind of genius which is not circumscribed.’ The exhibition brought in commissions for eighteen portraits, many of which were shown the following year at Wildenstein’s Gallery in New York.”³ Thayer’s career was launched.

Despite a long-standing mutual attraction between Thayer and Boston lawyer Donald Starr, the artist hesitated to entertain thoughts of marriage. Koval describes her quandary as “unwilling to put less than her whole heart into either marriage or career, and uncertain as to how well the two could co-exist.” She communicated her fears to Donald in a letter from Paris in 1932:



TH-236 Polly Thayer Starr (1904–2006), *Engulfed in Green*
Oil on canvas board, 12 x 16 inches, Signed Lower Right: Polly Thayer
Circa 1940 \$5,800



34576 Lilian Westcott Hale (1881–1963), *Spring by the Wayside, Dedham, MA*
Oil on canvas, 36 x 30 inches, Signed Lower Left: Lilian Westcott Hale \$195,000

*I have been working like a dog... and for the first time feel a power in me that if I have the strength, I can make grow... How much it amounts to I don't know and I fear, and sometimes it almost makes me face abandoning it, that the handwriting on the wall reads that only what you are is what counts.*⁴

Regardless, Thayer married Donald Starr in 1933. They moved in a social circle that required much of her time, and she was expected to share Donald’s interest in sports and travel. When asked why she painted mostly portraits during the 1930s, Thayer said that having definite appointments for sittings allowed her to plan her schedule around them without complaint from her family. When her two daughters arrived in the early 1940s, however, her time for painting was curtailed. She worked hard to find time for her art, and made hundreds of drawings of her children and fellow Quakers at Sunday meeting. By 1950 she had assembled thirty paintings for a solo exhibition at Vose Galleries, and over the next decade had exhibitions in Boston, New York and Philadelphia. In Thayer’s obituary, Koval eloquently sums up the life of this remarkable artist:

She was an artist of international repute and an extraordinary woman who forged a career in tandem with a rich and varied personal life at a time when such an accomplishment was even harder to accomplish than it is now.

² *Chronicle*, WCVB TV, Boston, “Fenway Studios, Past and Present,” interview with Mary Richardson, 2004

^{3,4} Dorothy Koval, “Poetry of Hand and Spirit” in *Poetry of Hand and Spirit, Paintings and Drawings by Polly Thayer (Starr)*, Vose Galleries of Boston, 2001

POLLY THAYER (STARR) (NOVEMBER 8, 1904 – AUGUST 30, 2006): AN APPRECIATION

We are saddened to report that Polly Thayer Starr died at home on August 30th, in her 102nd year. She was a woman who commanded our admiration and respect for myriad reasons. She was a kind and compassionate person, a quiet philanthropist who has benefited innumerable charitable and humanitarian causes.

As an artist, Polly's rich life experiences, fueled by endless curiosity and the courage to challenge the status quo, provided the basis for her innovative, highly expressive artistic images. In all things, Polly was a taskmaster at getting things right.

Polly had her first one-person show at the gallery in 1950, and her exhibition here in 2001 marked the galleries' return to handling living artists after a forty-year hiatus. Since 2001 we have had four more exhibitions that showcased her remarkable artistic abilities, always informed by her lively intellect. Our lives are all the richer for having known Polly Thayer Starr, a woman whose courageous spirit and determination provide an example for us all.

— *The Vose Family*



Left to right: Marcia, Bill, and Terry Vose with Polly Thayer at her exhibition at Vose Galleries in 2001



Polly Thayer Starr (1904–2006), *The Algerian Tunic*
Oil on canvas, 35 x 30 inches, 1927
Private collection

Polly Thayer's self portrait of 1927 [The Algerian Tunic] confirms that a Sargent-esque stance of distinction persisted in Boston portraiture from the 1890s well into the next century. Thayer presents herself with the fetching poise of Parmigianino's long-necked madonnas... From a setting aglow with beautiful fruits, flowers, and fabrics, she casts an intelligent gaze at her viewers: one of her hands seems to hold back, with Brahmin-like detachment, while the other wields a paintbrush and reaffirms the subtle determination of the face.

— Trevor Fairbrother, "History Lessons and the Boston School," *Vose ArtNotes* (2004)

"Life in the city as a young child was, well, we roller-skated on the Esplanade, days on end—that was great fun—and then Mayor Curtis's two daughters were just a block up, and they were a very lively, high-spirited pair. My sister and I played endless games of every kind—hide and seek and everything you can think of—for years, and that I remember with great pleasure." — *Polly Thayer Starr*



34650 Polly Thayer Starr (1904–2006), *The Blizzard*
Mixed Media, 18 x 24 3/4 inches
Signed Lower Right: *P Thayer* / 1985, \$14,500



Th-24 Polly Thayer Starr (1904–2006)
The Light Drinkers, Pastel on paper
26 1/2 x 19 inches, Signed Lower Right:
Polly Thayer \$13,500



Th-76 Polly Thayer Starr (1904–2006)
White Cyclamen, Pastel on paper
25 1/2 x 19 3/4 inches, Signed Lower
Right: *P. Thayer* \$12,500

"A process takes over like automatic writing, impossible to describe, an entering into the person or creature or thing you are depicting. You feel you have succeeded if you have captured its essence, revealed its source in the ground of being. The object is transformed in the process—the Queen Anne's Lace becomes a burning bush, the cyclamen is seen leaping joyously toward the sun, the fish's eye is the eye of God." — *Polly Thayer Starr*

“My studio was my timeless place. It was where I lived most intensely, and where I wanted to live. If I wasn’t there enough I felt out of sorts, and had to find a way back to that haven where I could bring my spirit into concert with my hand. Of course I fought off the discipline once I got there. But as with prayer, I knew I was connecting with something that would not let me down. And I knew that if I had not trained my hand sufficiently, I might not be able to catch it when it came.” — *Polly Thayer Starr*



TH-20 Polly Thayer Starr (1904–2006), *Cabbages*
 Oil on canvas, 21 x 25 inches
 Signed Upper Right: *Polly Thayer '36*, 1936 \$15,500



TH-245 Polly Thayer Starr (1904–2006), *Incorporeal*
 Oil on canvas board, 24 x 30 inches, Signed Verso: *by Polly Thayer*
 Circa 1960 \$19,500



TH-217 Polly Thayer Starr (1904–2006), *House in Landscape*
 Oil on canvas, 20 x 24 inches, Circa 1937 \$12,500



TH-102 Polly Thayer Starr (1904–2006), *Going Home*
 Oil on canvas board, 16 x 11 inches, Studio Stamp \$5,800

Art and Collecting in America: An Illustrated Timeline

IN HISTORY



34477 Paul King (1867–1947), *Winter Hills*
Oil on canvas board, 12 x 16 inches, Signed Lower Right: *Paul King* \$9,500



34598 Aiden Lassell Ripley (1896–1969), *Middle Dam, on the Rapid River, Western Maine*, Watercolor on paper, 15 x 21 1/2 inches, Signed Lower Left: *A. Lassell Ripley* \$39,500



34575 Frederick Judd Waugh (1861–1940), *Breaking Waves*
Watercolor on paper, 15 x 27 inches, Signed Lower Right: *Waugh* \$22,000

1926–1929

Presidents: Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover

Dow Jones: high 162, low 145; unemployment 1.8%

Greta Garbo's salary goes from \$350 to \$5,000 per week

15 million Ford Model T's sold from 1908–1927

Al Capone gang nets \$100 million from liquor trade, \$55 million in protection and gambling

Charles Lindbergh flies across the Atlantic

Sacco and Vanzetti are executed in Massachusetts

Joseph Stalin comes to power, banishes Leon Trotsky and his followers

An estimated 10,000 artists live in U.S.

Brokers' loans to margin investors reach record \$4 million

Herbert Hoover ("a chicken in every pot") defeats Alfred E. Smith

Amelia Earhart is first woman to fly across Atlantic

Alexander Fleming observes a mold, penicillin, that destroys bacteria

32,000 speakeasies thrive in New York City

Stock market reaches all-time high of 381 on September 3; by November 13, it hits 198, almost half its former value, a drop of \$30 billion. 19 million shares sold in panic

1930–1941

Presidents: Herbert Hoover, Franklin D. Roosevelt

85,000 businesses fail, national income drops 50%

Smoot-Hawley Law raises import duties (1930)

Unemployment passes 4 million (8.7%)

The newspapers covering sleeping indigents are called "Hoover blankets"

Sliced bread (Wonder) makes its first appearance

Empire State Building and Chrysler Building open, the two tallest in the world

"We are the first nation in the history of the world to go to the poorhouse in an automobile" — Will Rogers

George Washington Bridge is built

Dow Jones: high 88, low 41; unemployment 23.6% (1932)

Kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby shocks America

Auto sales are down 80% from 1929

Adolph Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany (1933)

Franklin D. Roosevelt ("The only thing we have to fear is fear itself"), begins New Deal programs (1933)

5,000 banks fail. Bank holiday declared

Prohibition ends

Nazi Germany occupies Denmark, Norway, Belgium and France (1940)

U.S. sends food and other supplies to Allies through Lend-Lease program (1941)

Germany invades Soviet Union

Japanese Admiral Yamamoto leads attack on Pearl Harbor; U.S. enters war (Dec. 7, 1941)

IN THE ARTS

1926–1930

Fogg Museum at Harvard University opens

First full-length sound movie *The Jazz Singer* produced

Thomas Gainsborough's *The Harvest Wagon*, c. 1784, now in the Art Gallery of Ontario, brought \$360,000, which remained the world record price at auction until 1961

Mickey Mouse debuts in *Steamboat Willie*

Metropolitan Museum continues Spanish craze of the 1920s with showing of paintings from El Greco to Goya

Museum of Modern Art is founded in New York. Inaugural exhibition features Cezanne, Gauguin, Seurat, and Van Gogh

Grant Wood paints *American Gothic*, which becomes icon for American Scene painting of the 1930s. Edward Hopper paints *Early Sunday Morning*, a rejection of American Scene painting which he felt caricatured Americans

1931–1935

The Whitney Museum of American Art opens in New York

Federal government issues Public Works of Art Project which employs artists to paint murals and paintings for public buildings

New Deal projects inaugurated to employ writers, artists, musicians: Jackson Pollock, Wilem de Kooning, Arshile Gorky and Mark Rothko join

1936–1941

Frank Lloyd Wright begins work on private residence, *Falling Water*, in Pennsylvania

Solomon R. Guggenheim establishes the Museum of Non-Objective Art, New York

Cezanne's *Bathers* is purchased by the Philadelphia Museum of Art for \$110,000

Nazis condemn modern German artists, especially Expressionists
Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius emigrates from Germany and becomes Chairman of the Department of Architecture at Harvard

Andrew Mellon donates \$10 million and his \$25 million art collection to construct The National Gallery

John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* is published

Joseph Stella paints *The Brooklyn Bridge*

The new Museum of Modern Art in New York is completed

Katharine Hepburn stars in *The Philadelphia Story*

The Federal Art Project is ended

Bela Bartok and Arnold Schoenberg arrive in New York, as well as De Stijl abstract artist Piet Mondrian

European artists coming to the U.S. include Fernand Leger, Jacques Lipchitz, Marc Chagall, Moholy-Nagy and Salvador Dali

Influenced by Surrealism, and increasingly interested in psychology, Robert Motherwell, Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko experiment with automatic drawing in New York (1941)

National Gallery of Art opens its doors in Washington, D.C., with first show "Two Hundred American Watercolors" (1941)

VOSE GALLERIES CELEBRATES 100 YEARS IN BUSINESS (1941)



34632 John Whorf (1903–1959), *Racing Weather*
Watercolor on paper, 22 3/4 x 30 1/2 inches, Signed Lower Right: John Whorf
\$45,000

Boston artist **John Whorf** displays his skill at its apex in *On the Wind*. Capturing sea spray and blowing breeze, Whorf could adeptly move from an image of such dynamism to one of utter tranquility, as he so often did with his peaceful fishing scenes. Whorf was greatly influenced by the masterful John S. Sargent, and studied at the Boston Museum School and abroad, eventually becoming a full National Academician. He was a constant presence at Vose Galleries during the 1940s and 50s, his popular works guaranteeing income when finances were difficult. Today, he remains among the most sought after watercolorists of his generation.



34646 Anthony Thieme (1888–1954), *Old Aviles Street, St. Augustine, Florida*
Oil on canvas, 25 x 30 inches, Signed Lower Left: A Thieme
Price on request

Art and Collecting in America: An Illustrated Timeline

EARLY 20TH CENTURY NEW ENGLAND: THE CAPE ANN ART COLONIES

In the early decades of the 20th century, Massachusetts' North Shore was a magnet for artists seeking summer months out of the hot cities of Boston, New York, Chicago and beyond. The quaint villages of Cape Ann had been attracting marine painters since the 1850s, but the decades following the Civil War experienced a new wave of artists in the region. Winslow Homer first visited the area in 1871, but unlike the marine artists before him, he portrayed fishermen and families of the working seaports. A realist tradition continued as young artists who had recently studied abroad were drawn to the area. Having worked *en plein air* in the French countryside, many of these artists sought out picturesque New England towns in order to replicate their experiences.

From Impressionists such as Frank Duveneck and John Twachtman to Urban Realists like John Sloan and Edward Hopper, Gloucester in particular provided endless subject matter. Exhibition opportunities for this wide array of artists became plentiful as new galleries and art associations were founded in the first decades of the 20th century. Gallery-on-the-Moors opened in 1915—the first large exhibition venue in the area—and the Rockport and Gloucester Art Associations (later renamed the North Shore Arts Association) were soon to follow. By the 1920s artists began to settle in the region year round, including future pillars of the Cape Ann community: **Frederick Mulhaupt**, **Emile Gruppe** and **Anthony Thieme**. All three were influential educators and active members of the artistic community who contributed greatly to the area's heritage, and paved the way for future generations of Cape Ann painters.

Mulhaupt has often been called the “Dean of the Cape Ann School.” Coming all the way from Rock Port, Missouri, Mulhaupt made his first trip to Gloucester in 1907, discovering the town that he decreed “duplicates any view I care to paint.”¹ In 1922 he settled in town permanently,



33912 Frederick John Mulhaupt (1871–1938), *West Gloucester —Snow*
Oil on canvas, 25 x 30 inches, Signed Lower Right: *Mulhaupt* \$49,500

working from his studio on Rocky Neck and eventually founding the North Shore Arts Association. Although he preferred to paint alone, Mulhaupt was remembered as a gifted teacher who encouraged his students to discover their own style. Fellow artist Emile Gruppe believed that “Mulhaupt got the smell of Gloucester on canvas. He captured the mood of the place—and that's worth all the good drawing of a hundred lesser painters.”²

It was Mulhaupt's own work, exhibited at the National Academy of Design in 1925, that had originally encouraged Gruppe to visit Cape Ann. Raised in a family of artists, Gruppe was another non-native who moved to Gloucester permanently and became active in the Rockport and North Shore Arts Associations. He established his own gallery in the town's one-room schoolhouse at 32 Rocky Neck Avenue, and joined with John F. Carlson to form the longstanding Gruppe Summer School in 1942.

The artist who popularized the area perhaps to the greatest extent was Holland-born painter Anthony Thieme. Thieme immigrated to Boston at age 22 and settled in Gloucester, where he founded the Thieme School of Art in 1930. An eccentric and devoted artist, Thieme legendarily worked in all weather conditions, painting while standing in a hole in the floor of his station wagon. Tragically, Thieme's studio and its contents—30 years of work—burned to the ground in 1946. This incident encouraged the artist to strike out for southern locations; he visited South Carolina, Florida and even the Bahamas and Guatemala. Thieme's resulting oeuvre includes an interesting mix of quintessential New England harbor scenes, and bright, vibrant landscapes from tropical travels.



34380 Emile Albert Gruppe (1896–1978), *Cloudy Day, Gloucester, MA*, Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 inches, Signed Lower Left: *Emile A. Gruppe* \$31,000

¹ Charles Movalli, “Frederick Mulhaupt: New England Classic,” *American Artist*. (Jan 1978): 75.

² Kathleen Kienholz, “Frederick Mulhaupt.” *American Art Review*. Vol. 9, No. 4 (1999): 114.



34595 Emile Albert Gruppe (1896–1978), *Working on the Nets*
Oil on canvas board, 16 x 20 inches, Signed Lower Right: *Emile A. Gruppe* / 1946 \$9,500



34645 Anthony Thieme (1888–1954), *Gloucester Dock*
Oil on canvas, 16 x 20 inches, Signed Lower Right: *A Thieme* \$19,500



34548 Charles Edwin Lewis Green (1844–1915), *Hauling in the Boats*
Oil on canvas, 20 x 27 inches, Signed Lower Right: *C. E. L. Green* Private collection

The artistic heritage of Massachusetts' North Shore includes not only the celebrated towns of Gloucester and Rockport, but also the more southern villages of Lynn and Swampscott. As early as the 1850s, this area of coastline was attracting such artists as Albert Van Beest and William Bradford, and became a meeting ground for painters over the following decades. By 1882, the Lynn Beach School of painters was formed by **C. E. L. Green**, Edward Burrill (1835–1913), William Burpee (1846–1940), T. Clark Oliver (1827–1892), Edward Page (1850–1928) and Charles Woodbury (1864–1940).

Developing a unique style of regional Impressionism, Green and his companions focused on the picturesque beaches and active fishing communities of the area, and were greatly influenced by the *plein air* techniques made popular by the French artist Jules Bastien-Lepage. Unfortunately, the group faltered around the turn of the century, when the picturesque coastline of Lynn was altered by modern developments.

Art and Collecting in America: An Illustrated Timeline

EARLY 20TH CENTURY NEW ENGLAND: CHARLES WOODBURY (1864–1940) AND THE OGUNQUIT COLONY

The call of the Atlantic Ocean drew artists to the Maine coastline from near and far during the end of the 19th century, with the southern town of Ogunquit being one of many attractive locales. At the forefront of this movement was influential Boston artist Charles H. Woodbury (1864–1940). A native of Lynn, Massachusetts, Woodbury showed an aptitude for the arts early on and joined the Lynn Beach Painters at the age of sixteen. Although the youngest of the group, Woodbury was in many ways its leader, having exhibited the first Lynn Beach painting at the Boston Art Club in 1882. Woodbury had already become the youngest elected member



34479 Charles H. Woodbury (1864–1940), *Flood Tide*
Oil on canvas board, 12 x 17 inches
Signed Lower Left: *Charles H. Woodbury* \$14,500



CHW-55 Charles H. Woodbury (1864–1940), *Boat Ashore — Winter*
Oil on canvas, 20 x 27 inches, Signed Lower Left: *Dec 31 '04 Woodbury* \$22,800

of the BAC when only seventeen, and continued to have further success exhibiting and teaching throughout his career. Ogunquit, Maine, became Woodbury's primary home in 1897, and the school which he subsequently established there helped to shape the town as a major artist colony. Like Monhegan, Ogunquit attracted artists in search of the romantic and picturesque along the Maine coast. Both professionals and amateurs alike flocked to Woodbury's school, including many accomplished artists such as Gertrude Fiske and Mabel May Woodward.



34589 Charles H. Woodbury (1864–1940), *Hurricane*
Oil on canvas, 48 1/4 x 72 inches, Signed Lower Right: *Charles H. Woodbury* Private Collection



34638 Mabel May Woodward (1877–1945), *Monterey Coastline*
Oil on board, 10 x 13 inches \$16,000

Gertrude Fiske was a native of Boston and a Boston Museum School student, studying under Tarbell, Benson and Hale. Her eight years of summer study with Woodbury in Ogunquit had a dramatic influence on her work, as she developed a bold, painterly style much like Woodbury's own. She later established herself at the Fenway Studios and became one of the city's leading artists, exhibiting her prize-winning portraits and New England beach scenes across the country.



GF-62 Gertrude Fiske (1878–1961), *Late October*
Oil on canvas, 20 1/4 x 27 1/8 inches, Signed Lower Left: *Gertrude Fiske -1917-* \$8,000



34288 Charles H. Woodbury (1864–1940)
Easterly, 1933, Oil on canvas, 17 x 21 inches, Signed Lower Right: *Charles H Woodbury*, 1933 \$17,500

Mabel May Woodward is equally remembered today for her charming beach scenes. William Merritt Chase (1849–1916), Charles Hawthorne (1872–1930) and Woodbury were all influential teachers, but Woodward found a particular commonality with Woodbury in their passion for teaching and love for both the human and natural elements of the Ogunquit beaches. She went on to teach for twenty-five years at the Rhode Island School of Design, and became the first female president of the Providence Art Club.



34201 Mabel May Woodward (1877–1945), *Perkins Cove, Ogunquit, Maine*, Oil on canvas, 10 x 13 inches, Circa 1920 \$32,000



CHW-69 Charles H. Woodbury (1864–1940), *Winter Coast Line*, 1906
Oil on canvas, 29 x 36 1/4 inches, 1906 \$31,200

Rather than focus on technique, Woodbury emphasized expression and careful observation in his teaching. These attributes are clearly illustrated in his own powerful seascapes; while retaining traditional subject matter, they show a daring and experimental use of form and vivid color. His approach was also revolutionary, instructing his students: "We [paint pictures] primarily because we want to put into visible form some thought or feeling we have in the presence of our subject..."¹ Working with nearly one-hundred students each summer, Woodbury taught by example and individual criticism, eventually publishing his own book, *The Art of Seeing*, in 1925.

¹ Charles H. Woodbury. *Painting and the Personal Equation*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1919), 95.

Art and Collecting in America: An Illustrated Timeline

AMERICAN SCENE, REGIONALISM AND SOCIAL REALISM 1920–1950

IN HISTORY

By Marcia L. Vose and Carol L. Chapuis

While the Armory Show in 1913 opened America's eyes to radical new styles from Europe, the growth of isolationism between the two world wars and the Depression fostered an American art movement that was proudly nationalistic. During the Depression one-third of American workers had lost their jobs. Commercial art galleries closed; artists who lived on the fringe of the economy even in the best of times were desperate.

To assist artists without putting them on the dole, the Federal government supported approximately 3500 visual artists during the Depression under New Deal Programs (1933–1942). These programs resulted in 4,500 public murals, and countless easel paintings; writers, photographers, and other artists were paid \$25 to \$35 per week and, surprisingly, women and minorities were paid the same. These programs proved extremely influential in America's artistic life and supported the very existence of an American art during those difficult years. While in general optimistic and positive subjects were encouraged, artists were fairly free to tackle any subject they wished.

An important influence on the public art of the era, and later that of the Social Realists, was the work of Mexican muralists Diego Rivera, David Siqueiros and Jose Clemente Orozco, all of whom worked in the US at various times. Their subjects were leftist, even Communist, the people against the powerful, and they showed the same themes in their American work. Not everyone held these views—a commissioned Rivera mural at Rockefeller Center was ordered destroyed because the artist had included the head of Trotsky in the composition. The grand style of these vigorous murals, however, anticipated the rollicking, sweeping landscapes of Thomas Hart Benton, perhaps the most famous of the American Scene painters.



34332 Albert Gold (1916–2006), *The Carousel*
Oil on board, 33 x 45 1/4 inches, Signed Lower Left: *Albert Gold* \$27,500

Prior to serving as a World War II combat artist, **Albert Gold** had already become known for his honest depictions of American life. Portraying the results of the Great Depression, he often illustrated the unemployed, tenement life and circus scenes from his hometown of Philadelphia. Gold received the prestigious Prix de Rome at the city's Museum School and coupled his earthy realism with a high regard for quality of craftsmanship. A teacher himself, Gold adamantly believed that, "Draughtsmanship and craftsmanship are becoming quite rare. If you want to be remarkable in our times, try to draw."¹ Gold's dedication was well rewarded, and his works hang in many important venues worldwide, including the Pentagon, the Metropolitan Museum, London's National Gallery and the Smithsonian.

¹The Schoen Collection Catalog, *Coming Home: American Paintings, 1930–1950*. Nov. 2004—Jan. 2005.

1942–1944

President: Franklin D. Roosevelt (third term)

120,000 Japanese-Americans interned in relocation centers (1942)

Secretly authorized by FDR as Manhattan Project, J. Robert Oppenheimer directs European and American scientists to develop atomic bomb

"Rosie the Riveter" embodies spirit of women in the workplace

Betty Grable insures her legs through Lloyds of London

Sugar, tires and gasoline are rationed

Allies capture Italy (September, 1943)

Frank Sinatra launches his career with solo engagements at Paramount Theater, New York

Casablanca wins Oscar for best picture

D-Day: Allied troops land in Normandy (June 6, 1944). France and Belgium are liberated (Sept.). Germany counter-attacks and is defeated at Battle of the Bulge (Dec.)

Maj. Glenn Miller is lost on flight from England to Paris

A giant sequence-controlled computer with 50-foot panel of knobs and switches is built at Harvard

1945–1950

President: Harry Truman

FDR elected to fourth term, dies suddenly of stroke in Warm Springs, Georgia; Harry Truman becomes President

Adolf Hitler commits suicide in Berlin

"Atrocities," article with photographs appears in *Life Magazine*, revealing horror of Buchenwald

VE-Day, Germany surrenders (May 7, 1945)

Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima (Aug. 6, 1945)

Atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki (Aug. 9, 1945)

VJ-Day, Japan surrenders (Aug. 14, 1945)

UN Charter drawn up; 51 countries become members (1945)

12 Nazis sentenced to death at War Crimes Tribunal at Nuremberg; Hermann Goering commits suicide (1946)

Americans experience acute housing shortage as 4 million GIs come home

U.S. birth rate rises by 20% in one year; Benjamin Spock publishes *Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care*

The Diary of Anne Frank is published in U.S.

The House Un-American Activities Committee begins hearings on Hollywood communists

U.S. industrialist and advisor Bernard Baruch coins term "cold war"

Secretary of State George C. Marshall organizes European Recovery Programs

Charles Yeager breaks sound barrier in a rocket-powered Bell X-1 (1948)

Soviets blockade Berlin; Western powers airlift supplies to West Berliners

IN THE ARTS

1942–1943

With fall of France, many Surrealist artists come to New York, bringing their philosophy and ideas along

“Artists in Exile” exhibition held at Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York; includes Fernand Léger, André Masson, and ten others (1942)

Peggy Guggenheim starts Art of This Century, a museum-gallery that shows European abstract and surrealist artists

Mondrian starts *Broadway Boogie Woogie*

Edward Hopper completes *Nighthawks*

Rodeo is first performed—music by Aaron Copeland and choreography by Agnes De Mille

Pollock has first one-artist show at Art of This Century (1943)

Martha Graham premieres *Deaths and Entrances*

Norman Rockwell produces the poster *Ours to Fight for Freedom of Want*

Worcester Art Museum mounts exhibition of 18th century New England portraits

1944–1950

Abstract painter Hans Hofmann innovates a drip style of painting

Arshile Gorky paints *The Liver is a Cock's Comb*

Martha Graham and Aaron Copeland produce *Appalachian Spring*

Frank Lloyd Wright completes model for the Guggenheim Museum (1945)

Chicago Art Institute mounts ground-breaking exhibition of Hudson River School painting

Auction houses record largest business year in history; Parke-Bernet sells \$6 million in art (1945)

Carnegie prize is given to Jack Levine for *Welcome Home* (1946)

George Balanchine and Lincoln Kirstein organize the Ballet Society, later become the New York City Ballet

Large corporations—IBM, Pepsi-Cola, Chrysler—begin widespread support of the arts

Jackson Pollock produces first drip paintings (1947)

Wilem de Kooning paints *Pink Angel*.

Mark Rothko produces first soft-edged color-field paintings

Art of This Century holds show of young American avant-garde: Pollock, Rothko, Motherwell, William Baziotés, Clyfford Still, Adolph Gottlieb and David Hare

Baziotés, Still, Rothko, Motherwell, and Hare form a school called “Subjects of the Artist” (1948)

Gorky commits suicide at age 44

de Kooning produces first of his *Woman* series

Andrew Wyeth paints *Christina's World*

(*American Scene*, cont.)

American Scene painting is comprised of two movements, although disagreement about terms and the categorization of artists remains confusing. The first movement, Regionalism, found roots in the Midwest and portrayed American life in its small-town and rural grandeur. Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975), Grant Wood (1881–1942) and John Steuart Curry (1897–1946) were the leading figures of this group of artists, whose work reached the height of popularity in the thirties. Their optimistic, sometimes over-idealized depictions of American life were a solace to people during the difficult times of the Depression. Grant Wood was foremost in encouraging artists throughout the country to look to their own regions for inspiration and to allow home town America to provide the muse for a thoroughly American art.

The other component of American Scene art was Social Realism, a movement centered in the Eastern cities that united bohemians, radicals and immigrants. Its artists painted the gritty everyday life of the unfortunate, as well as everyday life in general: circus scenes, nightclub life, and life on the street. Powerful paintings of the unemployed, victims of racial and social injustice, the poor and downtrodden came from the agony of these painters fighting for social justice.



34422 Nicolai Cikovsky (1894–1984), *Veterinarian's Office*
Oil on canvas board, 29 7/8 x 35 1/2 inches \$38,500

The modern art movements of Cubism and Futurism were not unknown to Russian-born artist **Nicolai Cikovsky**. When he immigrated to New York City in 1923, the progressive curriculum of his Russian training showed clear influences in his early canvases. He remained active in New York for much of his career, exhibiting his avant-garde works at the Museum of Modern Art, the Corcoran Gallery of Art and many others. By the 1930s, his style had become affected by the work of his close friend Raphael Soyer, and Social Realism was suddenly a focus in his paintings. Scenes of urban and rural life dominated these later works, as he incorporated commentaries on the worker and common man. By the 1940s his American Scene paintings included portraits, still lifes and landscapes of his summers on Southampton, Long Island.

Art and Collecting in America: An Illustrated Timeline

AMERICAN SCENE, REGIONALISM AND SOCIAL REALISM 1920–1950 (CONTINUED)



On the front stoop of the red cottage, East Gloucester: (left to right) Seated—Paul Cornoyer, Paul Tietjens, John Sloan. Standing, middle row—Stuart Davis, Dolly Sloan, Katherine Groschke. Top row—F. Carl Smith, Agnes M. Richmond, Alice Beach Winter. 1915 photograph by Charles Allan Winter, Cape Ann Historical Association collection, gift of Helen Farr Sloan



33757 Agnes M. Richmond (1870–1964), *Louise at the Window*, Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 inches, Signed Upper Right: Agnes M Richmond / 1924 \$7,500

ENRICHING GLOUCESTER: THREE WOMEN “FROM AWAY”

Both born in Illinois, **Agnes Millen Richmond** (1870–1964) frequently exhibited with **Jane Peterson** (1876–1965). Both were also students and teachers at the Art Students League, and although Peterson rarely painted portraits, Richmond specialized in portraits of women and children.

Active in women’s suffrage and the promotion of socialism, Richmond must have sparked the lively evening discussions at the “red cottage”, where **Alice Beach Winter** (1877–1970) was a frequent guest. A Missouri native, she studied at the ASL after spending six years at the St. Louis School of Fine Arts, graduating with highest honors. A painter and sculptor, Winter was especially known for her portraits of children and illustrations for children’s books.

Little has been written to tie American Scene painting to the thousands of artists from all over the country who painted New England’s picturesque coastal regions and rolling hills. Beginning in the nineteen teens the North Shore of New England played host to an extremely diverse population of artists. From the Social Realist camp, John Sloan, a leading pupil of Robert Henri and an influential teacher at the Art Students League in New York City, rented a Gloucester summer home from 1914–1919 that has become known as “the little red cottage.” The cottage became the center for visiting artists, mostly from New York, who shared the same political views and were intrigued by the radical new art from Europe. Frequent guests included Paul Cornoyer (1864–1923), Agnes M. Richmond (1870–1964), Alice Beach Winter (1877–1970) and her husband, Charles (1869–1942), and the young Stuart Davis (1892–1964) and his family. There was always a lively mix of painters, musicians, and other artists who gathered in the evenings to talk painting theory and politics.

During art exhibitions held from 1916–1924 at Gallery-on-the-Moors, Gloucester’s first non-profit gallery, traditional painters showed alongside the more modern work by John Sloan (1871–1951), Stuart Davis (1892–1964), Hayley Lever (1876–1958), Theresa Bernstein (1890–2002) and local artist Charles Hopkinson (1869–1962). The Boston press regularly excoriated this new art and was happy to note “the conservative character of the pictures” in a 1917 exhibition.¹ Local patronage, fueled by the fishing industry and nearby quarries, clearly preferred traditional fare.

Art historian James O’Gorman, in his essay on the Gallery-on-the-Moors, noted: “. . . At one time or another Stuart Davis, Milton Avery, Joseph Stella, Marsden Hartley, Charles Demuth, Abraham Walkowitz, and Hans Hoffman worked or exhibited in this area, but they represented a minority. . . In a review of the Gloucester Society of Artists exhibition of August, 1929, [critic] A.J. Philpott noted in the *Boston Globe* that ‘either the eccentrics in painting have died out or they stayed out, and as they were not easily killed it is probable that they went into retirement.’”²

¹ James O’Gorman, “Parnassus on Ledge Road, The Life and Times of East Gloucester’s Gallery-on-the-Moors,” Crews and O’Gorman, *The Red Cottage* (Cape Ann Historical Association, 1992, unpaginated)

² Ibid.



33412 Jane Peterson (1876–1965), *The Letter*
Oil on canvas, 25 x 30 inches , Signed Lower Left: JANE PETERSON \$32,500