

Wanderlust

American Artists' Quest for Adventure and Love of Travel

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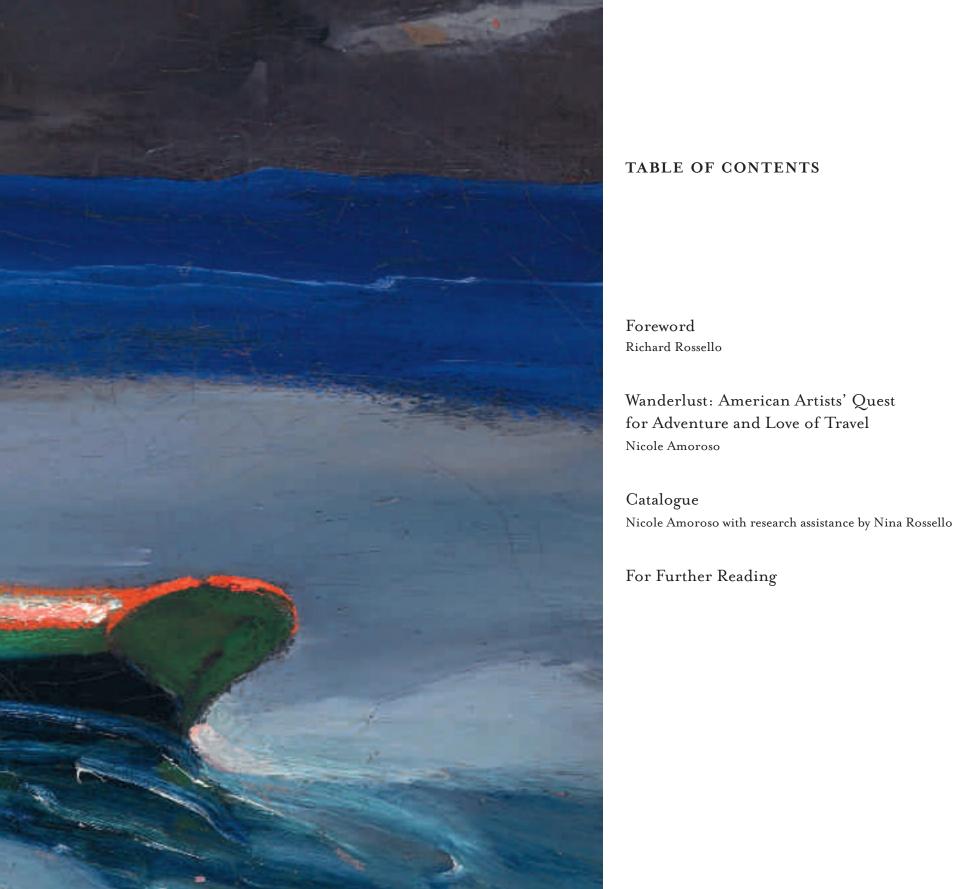


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FOREWORD

There are truisms that we express so often their potency erodes and the words sound shopworn to us even as we utter them. I have said that the world of art constitutes an "educational journey" to friends and clients hundreds of times over the years, no doubt to audible sighs and rolling eyes. But art really is a journey and an education. For collectors, it is a journey into past or alternate realities and into the lives of the artists they collect. Artists ask us to visit the world through their eyes and their experience, and accepting that invitation can reshape and expand the way we see and experience life. For artists, the journey is more daunting. Having issued the invitation to us to share their vision, they need to create something worthy of our attention! Their quest isn't simply to discover new, interesting subject matter, but to test the limits of their creative capacity. Their need to push themselves outside of their comfort zones resonates with all of us.

We can all look back on the times in our lives when we took great risk or found ourselves in unfamiliar territory. Invariably, those were the moments of our greatest growth, intellectually and emotionally. This exhibition examines the act of exploration, both physically and artistically, and its influence on the life and work of the selected artists. The physical risks that Thomas Moran took on his early journeys to Yellowstone and William Bradford endured on his treks to the Arctic are well documented and obvious. When we view the work of Maurice Prendergast and Arthur Carles, who ventured into the foreign territory of French Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, and early modernism, we realize that the risks they took were artistic and creative rather than physical. Their embrace and introduction of these ideas to American audiences was a different kind of journey.

For all artists, then and now, the greatest peril is the soul-shaking threat that, once having issued their invitation to share in their creative vision, the response will be hostile, derisive, or worst of all, uninterested. We hope to convince you that the courageous and ultimately triumphant artists included in the following pages took great risks and returned from their journeys stronger and wiser, bringing back to us the gift of their deep insight and sense of wonder.

As always, we owe a great debt of gratitude to Nicole Amoroso. Her scholarly and meticulous essays give us a deeper understanding of and appreciation for each of the included artists. Without her commitment to this project, it would not have come into being. We would also like to thank Nina Rossello for her assistance and critical insights. The fascinating historical facts she unearthed through diligent research gave dimension and color to the artists who make up the exhibition.

Richard Rossello

Wanderlust

American Artists' Quest for Adventure and Love of Travel

"Adventure is an element in the American artist's life which gives it singular zest and interest."

H.T. Tuckerman'

The American artist's adventuresome spirit dates back to the early nineteenth century, when some artists began traveling on expeditions as topographers and naturalists, seeking to give a face to the unknown wilderness and its inhabitants. Compared to the success and notoriety of their successors from the Hudson River School, these early artist/adventurers remained relatively few in number and somewhat obscure in name, yet they created an important precedent and in effect began a tradition that would partly define American artistic output for close to a century.

Thomas Cole (1801–1848) was the first artist to achieve critical acclaim and public accolade for his paintings of the more remote regions of the American landscape. When he first displayed his work in 1825 it was received with great enthusiasm, as it filled the need for a national expression in art. By deftly combining his profound reverence for nature with young America's ambitions of greatness, Cole set out to explore the country and bring it back in painted form to a public eager to express its potential and create its history. Cole's journeys to the wilderness of the Catskills and Adirondacks underlined his singular commitment to and great love of landscape painting. He chose to disregard the more pedestrian elements of a particular scene and focused instead on the beautiful, the sublime, the radiant details, and overriding mood. A legion of American landscape painters, eventually named the Hudson River School, would follow in his footsteps by setting out to paint the unknown American terrain in search of "wildness," which Cole defined in 1835 as "the most distinctive and perhaps the most impressive characteristic of American scenery."

Cole's untimely death in 1848 by no means disbanded his followers. In fact the artists who upheld his vision went on to execute monumental paintings that helped to articulate and promote an idea of America. The influences of nationalism, Manifest Destiny, spirituality, industrialization, and tourism all shaped an interest in travel and adventure among artists of the Hudson River School. The vastness of the American landscape and its "virgin" wilderness came to signify the great promise of the nation, and the artists who ventured out to paint it assumed heroic status, often risking life and limb to experience and capture the uncharted regions of their country and beyond.³

Indeed, by the mid-nineteenth century, the American landscape and ideas about nationhood were deeply entwined and played an important role in articulating national identity. Yet by the 1890s this mode of painting had become increasingly assailed for its scenic and monumental aesthetics. The appeal of figure painting grew often at landscape painting's expense, and the lure of Europe, particularly France, drew many American artists away from dramatically painting their homeland. Yet for many of them the imperative to venture forth and explore the world remained. Of course the

means by which they expressed themselves were quite different from their forebears; however, in many ways they shared the same adventuresome spirit.

The goal of this exhibition is to examine the importance of travel and adventure as they relate to the genre of landscape painting and the American artist's cultural identity. The wealth of information on this topic for the artists of the Hudson River School makes them ideal candidates for the discussion; however, the exhibition also includes later American artists for whom travel played a critical role in their artistic development and stylistic evolution. The differences in style and intention between the artists included herein are often stark, and the goal is not to compare them to each other. For example, the forces that drew Thomas Moran (1837-1926) to the Grand Canyon (cat. 7) throughout his career are quite different from what drew Marsden Hartley (1877-1943) to New Mexico and Maine (cats. 23, 26) in 1919 and 1922. Nonetheless, the significance of location, how the artist arrived there, and why he went all factor into the viewer's appreciation of the paintings and understanding of the artist's motives. Wanderlust explores the rich tradition of American landscape painting by highlighting artists who took risks in their travels, both physical and artistic, in order to communicate their personal visions about their country and nature itself.

Getting There

For artists of the Hudson River School the act of getting to a particular location was of great importance. In the mid-nineteenth century the artistic enterprise became linked to the quest and by extension heroism became linked with the artistic persona.⁵ The most adventuresome American artists from this period were hailed for their willingness to travel far and wide and in effect bring the nation back to a public who would not dare face the peril that such journeys often entailed. Artists such as Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900), Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902), and Thomas Moran offered their viewers sweeping panoramas of distant sights like Mount Desert, the Rocky Mountains, or the Grand Canyon, to name only a few. Church went so far as to travel to the jungles of South America, first in 1853 and again in 1857, and to the icebergs of Newfoundland and Labrador in 1859. His masterwork Heart of the Andes from 1859, Bierstadt's The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak from 1863, and Moran's Chasm of the Colorado from 1873-74 became some of the most popular paintings of their time. Barbara Novak in "Grand Opera and the Still Small Voice" writes: "Not only did they [the paintings] educate would-be travelers to the wonders and glories of far-flung places, but they were considered . . . artistic tours de force, meticulous in detail, magical in effect." She goes onto say that the myths that came to be associated with these far-off

places had to do with their newness, or the idea that the "grand, beautiful and untamed aspects of nature" were approached freshly by American artist/adventurers.⁶

The excitement that such landscape painting inspired in the public was buoyed by the forward march of progress and the sense of national pride related to it. In 1864 James Jackson Jarves wrote in The Art Idea: "The thoroughly American branch of painting, based on the facts and tastes of the country and people is . . . landscape." However, by the 1890s the American frontier came to be thought of as closed. The wilderness tradition and importance of the quest that the painters of the Hudson River School cultivated and the sense of nationalism that was linked to those ideas changed its shape. This shift created somewhat of an identity crisis for the American artist and public at large. If the untamed and remote landscape of the country no longer best characterized part of its national identity, then what did, and what was the role of the artist? Surely American artists continued to travel throughout their country and paint its sights; however, images of the dramatic wilderness slowly gave way to the beauty of more commonplace locales. If nature inspired spiritual awe and reverence for the Hudson River School painters, it was accessible and something to be enjoyed by the artists of a generation later. Travel remained an important component of landscape painting; however, the forces of culture had ostensibly tamed the natural wild, which meant that the role of the artist/adventurer had changed, too.

The Changing Landscape

In Gail Davidson's essay for Frederic Church, Winslow Homer, and Thomas Moran: Tourism and the American Landscape, she writes that tourism and land development in the Northeast helped to change the look of and ideas about the American landscape in the mid-nineteenth century; moreover, the painters of the Hudson River School first contributed to the process by stimulating a burgeoning tourism industry for travelers who wanted to see for themselves the places depicted in their paintings. 8 Thus, artists and writers alike were among the vanguard of visitors to such areas along the East Coast as Niagara Falls, the Adirondacks, and the Catskills. As these locations became popular tourist destinations, the artists would retreat to ever more remote regions like New Hampshire, Maine, and of course the American West in order to reach nature in its untrammeled form. This call for exploration helped to refine the American artist's identity during this period. According to Davidson, they thought it was their "job to focus the untrained eye on the moral lessons to be drawn from the landscape."9 Therefore, they brought the most remote regions of the country to the people in grand fashion and subsequently satisfied the myth of a bigger, newer America that could be experienced by the public through their own desire to travel or by bearing witness to the sights seen in these iconic works of art. 10

The taste for the operatic landscapes of the Hudson River School began to change toward the end of nineteenth century, however; and some artists started painting more intimate pictures of their travels. Winslow Homer's (1836–1910) landscapes (see cat. 16) were executed on a smaller scale, most often were populated, and had decidedly secular themes; instead of standing in awe of nature's spectacle, his inhabitants interacted with it and enjoyed it." With this shift, Davidson talks about the development of two approaches to the landscape: the secular and pragmatic, and the spiritual and personal -both of which were tied to the American public's changing perception of itself. The Hudson River School painters fell into the spiritual/personal camp, as their landscapes revealed God's presence, America's great blessings, and their own ability to act as conduits to bring the divine to the people through their landscape paintings. For the later artists, such as Homer, who fell into the secular and pragmatic camp, the landscape was something to be improved upon with "human activity, purpose, individuality, and democratic values."12 The latter of the two became the dominant mode of expression, but both camps stirred the imaginations of the American people and often prompted them to get out and see their country.

The "Great American Thing"

As modernist philosophy came to dominate American artistic circles in the early twentieth century, the imperative to find and paint "truly American" subjects in a wholly original manner reached almost a fever pitch. The group most affected by this philosophy were the artists who made up Alfred Stieglitz's (1864–1946) circle, and before them, the American impressionists and the Ashcan School painters. Of course, the divergent styles and often acrimonious philosophical differences between these artistic circles most often put them at odds with one another; however, in many ways they shared the common goal of locating and capturing authenticity in the American experience by painting the landscape.

While some of these artists continued to travel to the far reaches of their country and distant shores for daring new subjects, many of them were content to paint their immediate surroundings or familiar destinations. What made their work fresh and original, and at times off-putting, was how they captured these places and what they chose to focus on. By the late nineteenth century the precision and monumentality of the Hudson River School landscapes seemed woefully out of touch with the newest artistic trends coming over from Europe. Moreover, America's role as an emerging industrial giant caused many of its citizens to desire images that promoted their country's modernity and sophistication. Artists often led this charge and offered the public works of art that challenged and redefined American cultural identity. Their

travels frequently inspired them to see and paint the world very differently, and many of them used their excursions around their own country as a principle influence on their artistic inspiration.

Georgia O'Keeffe (1887–1986) set out to capture "the great American thing" in her landscapes of New Mexico, and her words poignantly capture the intentions of all of the artists included in this exhibition. The act of travel and the process of getting there, no matter where the location, was an important step in each of these artists' determination to discover American art in their own country and beyond.

H.T. Tuckerman, quoted in Barbara Novak, "The Primal Vision: Expeditions," in Nature and Culture: American Landscape and Painting, 1825—1875 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 119.

Thomas Cole, quoted in Tim Barringer, "The Course of Empires," in Tim Barringer and Andrew Wilton, *The American Sublime: Landscape Paintings in the United States,* 1820–1880, exh. cat. (London: Tate Publishing, 2002), p. 48.

³ Novak, "Primal Vision," p. 119.

⁴ Barringer, "The Course of Empires," p. 39.

⁵ Novak, "Primal Vision," p. 119.

⁶ Barbara Novak, "Grand Opera and the Still Small Voice," in *Nature and Culture*, pp. 19, 23 respectively.

⁷ James Jackson Jarves, quoted in Tim Barringer, "The Course of Empires," in American Sublime, p. 39.

⁸ Gail Davidson, "Landscape Icons, Tourism, and Land Development in the Northeast," in Frederic Church, Winslow Homer, and Thomas Moran: Tourism and the American Landscape, exh. cat. (New York: Smithsonian, Cooper Hewitt, National Design Museum, 2006), p. 6.

⁹ Ibid., p. 37.

¹⁰ Novak, "Grand Opera," p. 15.

II Davidson, "Landscape Icons," p. 48.

¹² Ibid, p. 68.





Ι

LOUIS RÉMY MIGNOT

1831-1870

View Near Newburgh, New York, 1856

Oil on canvas 40 x 51 inches (101.6 x 129.5 cm) Signed and dated lower left: Mignot / 1856

Provenance

Private collection, Detroit; Private collection

Louis Mignot's peripatetic career seems to have been driven by numerous factors. By far the most compelling is the sense of rootlessness the artist is believed to have felt from an early age. Born in Charleston, South Carolina, Mignot's mother died before his fourth birthday and he was virtually abandoned by his father. In 1851 he left for the Netherlands to study art under Andreas Chalfont in The Hague. Upon his return, Mignot moved to New York City and developed his most meaningful relationships with the artists he met there. Frederic Church (1826–1900) became a good friend, and the two men traveled to South America together in 1857. The experience Mignot had and the scenery he saw provided the source material for many of his subsequent paintings, which earned him critical praise and public attention. With the outbreak of the Civil War, however, Mignot's comfortable position in the New York art world became challenged. While he was not a true Southerner, in that his connection to his family and Charleston was loose at best, he was not a Union lover either, so in 1862 he left for London, where he remained until his premature death at the age of thirty-nine from small pox.

Mignot painted View Near Newburgh, New York in 1856, a year before his trip to South America. During this time he made regular sketching excursions into the hinterlands of upstate New York, and View Near Newburgh embodies his burgeoning mature style. The expansive view of the mountains in the distance and the crisply painted foreground was a popular stylistic conceit Mignot employed frequently. His inclusion of the solitary figure also allowed the viewer to imagine himself/herself as the individual out there experiencing such an inspired view of nature.

The identifying title of *View Near Newburgh* is interesting, given that many of Mignot's landscapes were composites from his many sketching trips. Indeed, unlike his friend Church and other colleagues, Mignot did not pay close attention to the details of a particular location nor was he concerned with scientific accuracy. Instead, he concentrated on capturing the light and atmosphere of a landscape, or even more generally the essence of a view. Kevin Sharp in *A Wilder Image Bright* postulates that Mignot's feelings of displacement and dislocation might have driven him to paint these attractive but non-specific landscapes. Those feelings also seem to have been at the heart of Mignot's restless spirit and need to keep moving from place to place.¹



HOMER DODGE MARTIN

1836-1897

Adirondack Lake, 1863

Oil on canvas 27 x 48 inches (68.6 x 121.9 cm) Signed and dated: *H Martin / 1863*

Provenance

Private collection, Detroit; Private collection

Exhibition

Vero Beach Museum of Art, Vero Beach, Fla., A Wilder Image Bright: Hudson River School Paintings from the Manoogian Collection, January 31–March 28, 2004.

Literature

Kevin Sharp, A Wilder Image Bright: Hudson River School Paintings from the Manoogian Collection (Vero Beach: Vero Beach Museum of Art, 2004), cat. 17, pp. 86–87. The 1849 publication of Joel T. Headley's *Life in the Woods* is credited as being largely responsible for stimulating early public interest in the Adirondack Mountains. The region was first mapped in the early 1830s, and in the autumn of 1835 Thomas Cole made his first journey there to Schroon Lake, where the spectacular scenery made a deep impression on him and prompted him to return two years later to make sketches for his masterwork *Schroon Lake* (c. 1837–38). Hailed for its beautiful, unspoiled nature and health-giving effects, the region attracted many of Cole's followers, who had already painted its wild and untouched sites by the time the crush of tourists arrived in the 1860s. In fact, by then many American landscape painters had moved on to more remote regions of the country in search of an ever-distant wilderness.

A native of Albany, the young Homer Dodge Martin benefited from the influx of painters who passed through his city on their journeys to the Adirondacks, Catskills, and Lake George. Despite the fact that Martin was largely self-taught, his exposure to the lessons and style of Cole through his followers and Martin's own willingness to experiment artistically demonstrate an early command of the painting medium. Martin moved to New York City by 1863 and opened a studio. His subsequent trips to the Adirondacks provided him with some of his favorite subject matter, as amply shown in Adirondack Lake.

Kevin Sharp in A Wilder Image Bright discusses Adirondack Lake as Martin's response to both the tradition of Thomas Cole but also John Frederick Kensett's (1816–1872) compositional strategies of unified organization, polished surface effects, and luminous light. Martin organizes the painting in the favored horizontal format and builds the composition in bands from foreground to background. While the public had certainly seen images of the Adirondacks by the time this painting was completed, Martin infuses the work with a sense of mystery and quiet serenity. It does not boast dramatic effects, even though it is large, but instead subtly envelopes the viewer in what Barbara Novak calls a "monologue of transcendental unity," where the presence of the artist and spectator are all but abolished in favor of a "wordless dialogue with nature."

Martin's curious mind prompted him to experiment with the style of the Barbizon School and eventually Impressionism. This willingness to experiment and evolve artistically made it difficult for critics and collectors alike to pin Martin down stylistically, which actually worked against him in his late career. However, years after his death Frederic Fairchild Sherman in 1917 wrote: "[Homer Dodge Martin's] finest canvases looked as if no one but God and he had ever seen the places pictured."



ALBERT BIERSTADT

1830-1902

Landscape with Cattle

Oil on board $5 \times 7^{1/2}$ inches (12.7 x 19.1 cm) Signed lower left with monogram: AB

Provenance

Private collection

In many ways Albert Bierstadt regarded the American West as his entrée to artistic renown and success. From 1853 to 1857 he resided in Europe, studying at the Düsseldorf School and traveling widely throughout the Continent. At the end of the summer of 1857, Bierstadt returned home to the States and set his sight ambitiously on traveling to and painting the majestic views of the American West. In 1859 he was granted permission to join Colonel Frederick W. Lander's expedition to the Overland Trail, an experience that profoundly affected the course of Bierstadt's entire artistic career.

On that first expedition and those that followed, Bierstadt explored uncharted regions and specific sights that had yet to be seen by most of the American public. It's difficult for a viewer in the twenty-first century to fathom the kind of bravery and hardship these journeys entailed. But Bierstadt and the many other artist/adventurers like him endured hostile weather, the threat of attack from Native Americans, and the ever-present thought that they and their team were alone to face the unknown in a vast and unfamiliar landscape. Yet their adventuresome and enterprising spirits took them away from the comforts of home time and again, so that they could capture the American wilderness before it was lost.

Bierstadt and many of his painter colleagues made small plein-air oil sketches while they were out in the field, so that when they returned to their studios to create their monumental easel paintings, they would have accurate visual recordings of the landscape. In her exemplary study of these oil sketches, The Painted Sketch, Eleanor Harvey states: "The effectiveness of a finished painting was judged by its ability to convey the general 'truth' of a place," and oil sketches executed en plein air were critical to achieving this goal. They also made great gifts, and Bierstadt, in particular, favored giving them to friends.

Landscape with Cattle is one such oil sketch by Bierstadt. It is unknown when or where he painted it, but the prairie in the foreground and mountain range in the background resemble his other works from Nebraska. Bierstadt's ability to capture the complete sense of the landscape on such a small scale is an important hallmark of these works. In Landscape with Cattle the artist effectively communicates the vastness of the prairie and monumentality of the mountains, while also capturing the subtle nuances of the shadows and light. The quiet and contemplative mood of this work also stands in stark contrast to the drama of Bierstadt's large canvases. Indeed, even the setting sun, with its bursts of pink around the clouds, is soft and luminous, creating an effect of quiet wonder for the beauty and abundance of the land.



MARTIN JOHNSON HEADE

1819-1904

Wilderness Sunset, 1861

Oil on canvas 28 x 58 inches (71.1 x 147.3) Signed and dated lower right: M.J. Heade / 1861

Provenance

Vose Galleries, 1965; Stuart C. Welch, Cambridge, Mass.; Kennedy Galleries, New York; Private collection, Detroit; Private collection

Exhibitions

Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., Luminous Landscape: The American Study of Light, 1860-1875, 1966; Martin Johnson Heade, 1969; Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, The Romantic Vision in America, 1971; Kennedy Galleries, New York, American Masters, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, March 22-April 8, 1972; R. W. Norton Gallery, Shreveport, La., The Hudson River School: American Landscape Painting from 1821 to 1907, October 14-November 24, 1973; Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Fla., Nineteenth-Century Topographic Painters, 1974—75; Kennedy Galleries, New York, American Master Paintings, 1753-1985, 1986; Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition (SITES), American Painting, 1840-1910, November 16, 1987-May 13, 1988;

Amarillo Art Center, Texas, The Character of American Light, October 26—December 3, 1989; Boca Raton Museum, Fla., Martin Johnson Heade: The Floral and Hummingbird Studies from the Saint Augustine Historical Society, 1992.

Literature

Joseph T. Butler, "The American Way with Art," Connoisseur, vol. 179, no. 720 (February 1972), p. 135; Jerry M. Bloomer, "The Hudson River School Exhibition," American Art Review, vol. I, no. 4 (May–June 1974), p. 123; Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., The Life and Works of Martin Johnson Heade (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), pp. 35, 50, fig. 13, cat. 40; Detroit Institute of Arts, American Paintings in the Detroit Institute of Arts, vol. 2 (New York: Hudson Hills, 1997), pp. 100-101; Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., The Life and Work of Martin Johnson Heade: A Critical Analysis and Catalogue Raisonné (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 220.

Martin Johnson Heade seems to have moved to New York City in 1858 to focus on becoming a landscape painter, and he could not have found a more suitable group of artists with whom to surround himself than those he met at the Tenth Street Studio. As the heir apparent to Thomas Cole, Frederic Church was by far the most famous artist at that time, and Heade was immediately drawn to the man and his work. As the two became friends, Heade visited Church's studio and marveled over such paintings as *Niagara* and *Heart of the Andes*, both of which deeply affected his own artistic practice and contributed to his reinvention of himself as a painter.¹

During the summers between 1858 and 1863, Heade traveled extensively and made many sketches for later landscape paintings. Indeed, travel became central to Heade's career. In 1867, H.T. Tuckerman stated: "The love of travel is great with him." Heade's restive spirit seems to have compelled him to explore the world and paint its exotic riches, going so far as the jungles of Brazil in 1863, the tropics of Nicaragua and Columbia in 1866 and 1870, respectively, and then to Florida in 1883 until his death in 1904. Before he journeyed to the outer reaches of Central and South America, Heade actively explored the hinterlands of his own country. He left New York City in 1860 and settled in Boston, where the surrounding landscape offered him great views for his increasingly ambitious marsh scenes.³

Painted in 1861, Wilderness Sunset has long been considered Heade's response to Church's Twilight in the Wilderness, from a year earlier. Heade's painting demonstrates the influence of Church and the other Hudson River School painters, but it also reveals his unique treatment of the genre. Measuring almost five feet long Wilderness Sunset was Heade's largest work to date, clearly a nod to Church's predilection for monumental canvases. The dramatic red glow of the beautiful sunset also seems to speak to Church's taste for such iconic views. Heade organizes the painting's composition with strong horizontal lines, heightening the panoramic effect of the scene and its ability to transport a viewer. Yet the atmospheric effects of the late afternoon light and inclusion of the birds in motion, as Theodore Stebbins points out, both reveal Heade's interest and belief in the transitory quality of nature itself. For him, the natural world was constantly changing not fixed or eternal, and his most successful landscapes communicate this effect. The viewer knows that the light in Wilderness Sunset is just about to change and that the birds will soon be out of view. Even though it is supremely contemplative, this is not a static landscape and Heade masterfully brings it to life. One might say that his singular ability to capture the natural world's fleeting effects echoes his own restless spirit and refusal stay in one place for very long.



WILLIAM BRADFORD

1823–1892

Fishing Scene on Rough Scenes, 1864

Oil on canvas 16 x 24 inches (40.6 x 61 cm) Signed and dated lower right: Wm. Bradford 1864

Provenance

Private collection, Pennsylvania

William Bradford's career as a marine painter began modestly in his hometown of Fairhaven, Massachusetts. In 1854 he traveled to New York in search of an instructor and found Dutch artist Albert Van Beest as a willing mentor. The two men moved back to Fairhaven, where they shared a studio, and Van Beest encouraged Bradford to explore more advanced types of marine painting. Perhaps the most critical influences on Bradford's mature style and choice of subject matter came from Albert Bierstadt, who returned to his native New Bedford in 1857, and Frederic Church, whose fame was well known in artistic circles. Although it is impossible to know for sure, Bierstadt's and Church's unwavering spirit of adventure, love of travel, and entrepreneurial enterprise probably compelled Bradford to set out on his own journey to the coast of Labrador in 1861. It seems likely that Bradford was aware of Church's epic 1861 canvas The Icebergs and Louis Legrand Noble's popular account from the same year of their expedition, After Icebergs with a Painter. Bradford might have also been inspired by Bierstadt's equally ambitious treks to the American West. Clearly, both artists' success and acclaim appealed to Bradford, so he decided to build on his talent for marine painting by choosing an exotic locale that would have intrigued a public mesmerized by exploration.

From 1861 to 1869 Bradford personally organized numerous trips to the Arctic, complete with chartered vessels, paid captains and sailors, photographers, a handful of paying guests, and a few friends. His most successful paintings came from these trips, as he brilliantly captured the perils of the frozen waters and heroism of those brave enough to navigate it. Bradford also represented that same sense of adventure and courage in his American seascapes from the 1860s. Fishing Scene on Rough Seas from 1864 might not depict the far-off and unknown landscape of the Arctic, but it demonstrates Bradford's high regard for the sailors and drama of the high seas. His audience loved the heroic imagery he so eloquently captured and Bradford's firsthand knowledge of such maritime adventures added a sense of authenticity to his paintings, a quality his collectors would have greatly admired. Bradford's dexterous handling of the paint medium works in concert with his astute observations of the light, water, and effects of weather, making Fishing Scene on Rough Seas a powerful expression of his mastery of the seascape idiom and his unwavering respect for the might of the water and courage of the men whose adventuresome spirits he so clearly shared.



WILLIAM TROST RICHARDS

1833-1905

New Jersey Shore, 1873

Oil on canvas laid on panel 24 x 44 inches (61 x III.8 cm) Signed and dated lower right: Wm T Richards 1873

Provenance

Private collection; Alexander Gallery, New York William Trost Richards's entire career was marked by an in-depth, almost scientific study of nature, and his travels to various regions throughout the United States and Europe greatly enriched his artistic education and deeply affected the evolution of his style. Early in his career, Richards's job as an ornamental copyist confined him to the Philadelphia area, where he frequently sketched the vicinity along the Schuykill and Wissahickon Rivers. But as his artistic career began to evolve, he was able to take excursions to the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania, the Catskills, the Adirondacks, and a host of other locations, where he made sketches that combined his deep reverence for the power of nature with his superb technical skill. In August of 1855, he set sail on the first of many trips to Europe. However, his time abroad, at least early in his career, reinforced his allegiance to the American landscape. "Neither Tuscany or Switzerland," he wrote, "has in any way lessened my love of American scenery."

After focusing much of his early work on landscapes of the American interior, in the I870s Richards devoted himself almost entirely to painting coastal scenes. In I874 he established Newport, Rhode Island as his summer residence, and spent the majority of his time exploring the area and also traveling up and down the coast from New Jersey to Maine on sketching trips. The light and topography of the coastline appealed to Richards most, and in his numerous sketches he precisely recorded the combinations of rocks, beach, and water. The attention he paid to detail in concert with his deep interest in scientific inquiry won him praise and attention from critics and collectors alike.

New Jersey Shore, painted in 1873, stands as a somewhat early coastal painting by Richards. He first turned to the subject in 1867, but had been visiting the New Jersey shore since 1859. In the painting we see the artist's favorite stylistic and thematic conceits taking shape. He would go on to paint them often in the numerous marines he executed throughout his career, but in this work they are relatively novel. Here, Richards treats the moving water in a linear fashion, and carefully captures the reflective light on the water and shore. He deftly combines his rendering of precise detail with a sense of the limitlessness of the Atlantic Ocean and fleeting effects of the atmosphere. Richards creates the perfect balance between a loving transcription of nature and an evocation of the sensations it inspires. His monumental treatment of the subject and ability to capture the poetic drama of the scene were squarely in line with the public's taste for epic landscapes, making Richards one of America's premier painters of the coast.



THOMAS MORAN

1837-1926

A Side Canyon, Grand Canyon, Arizona, 1905

Oil on board

14 x 20 inches (35.6 x 50.8 cm)

Signed lower left with initials in monogram: TMoran. 1905

Inscribed on verso: for J.G. Moulton

Provenance

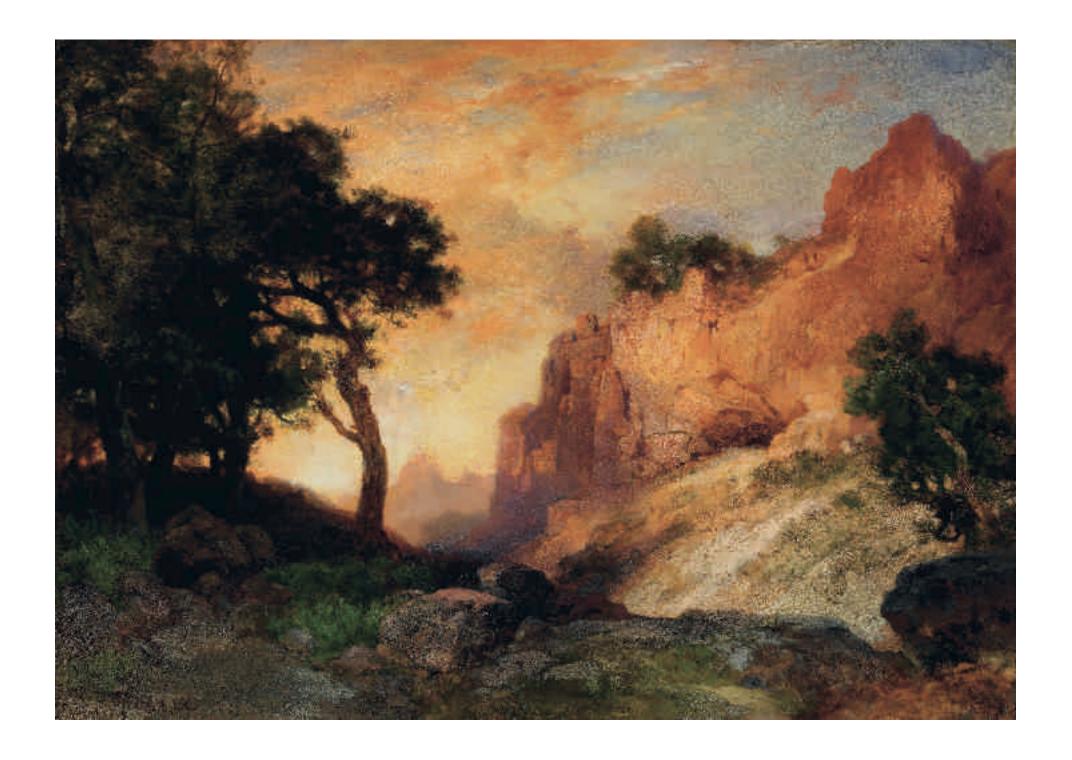
J.G. Moulton, Chicago; R.E. Cies,
Oklahoma; Frank and Merle Buttram,
Oklahoma, acquired from the above,
1924; By descent in the family; Christie's,
New York, Important American Paintings,
Drawings, and Sculpture, May 21, 2008,
lot 25; Michael Altman Fine Art and
Advisory Services, New York

Thomas Moran first traveled to the Grand Canyon in the summer of 1873 as a member of Major John Wesley Powell's (1834–1902) expedition. Captivated by the rugged splendor and mesmerizing light of the landscape, Moran returned with his son Paul in 1892 and visited often from 1901 until 1910. Along with his paintings of Yellowstone, Moran's work became synonmous with the Grand Canyon and the American West in general. His numerous trips to the frontier and his iconic images of its spectacular landscapes helped to shape the nation's image of itself and its people's bond with their land, which in the aftermath of the Civil War was particularly important for re-unifying the country. Moran knew that his monumental canvases inspired awe and veneration among those who saw them and he sought to present his viewers with the best possible views of the West's most remote and wild places. His "romantic reportage," as Floramae McCarron-Cates calls it, stirred great national pride and a deep yearning among the public to journey to these spectacular places themselves.²

By being the first artist to explore and sketch both the Grand Canyon and Yellowstone, Moran effectively staked claim on these phenomenal landscapes. His images not only stirred the American public's imagination and inspired reverance for nature's wonder, they also catalyzed both landmarks' tourism industries and subsequently their preservation as national parks. Moran's relationships with the Northern Pacific Railroad and the Santa Fe Railroad in addition to the various magazines he submitted illustrations to helped to popularize the American frontier and win him great renown. By the time he painted A Side Canyon in 1905, thousands of people had visited the Grand Canyon and Moran's artistic reputation was secure.

Even though A Side Canyon is a later work and Moran had seen the Grand Canyon many times, he still adeptly communicates the drama and beauty this particular view commands. His expert handling of the color and light demonstrates an intimate understanding of the landscape and a profound respect for it. As with all of Moran's works, the actual vantage point from which one might view this scene might appear differently than the painting itself, as Moran's goal was not a literal transcription of nature but rather a distillation of its essence into an aesthetically arresting work of art.

A Side Canyon evokes the elegance and grandeur that characterize Moran's best paintings of the Grand Canyon. He conjures the primordial beauty of the scene and imbues it with a sense of majesty while simultaneously recalling the West's wild, untamed past.



WILLIAM STANLEY HASELTINE

1835-1900

Coast at Sori, Italy, 1893

Oil on canvas 25 x 44 inches (63.5 x III.8 cm) Signed and dated lower right: W.S. Haseltine '93

Provenance

Private collection, Pennsylvania

William Stanley Haseltine traveled through the landscape with the eye of an artist and mind of a scientist. His precise observations and recordings of the natural world in both his sketches and finished paintings demonstrate an unfailing attention to detail and strong interest in geology and earth science. This lifelong passion began for him as a student at Harvard University, where he studied with the famous paleontologist, glaciologist and geologist Louis Agassiz (1807–1873). In the early 1860s Haseltine's views of Mount Desert in Maine and Naragansett Bay in Rhode Island were popular among collectors for their fidelity to each place and spectacular sense of light. After spending almost a decade living in New York City from 1858 to 1866, and traveling up and down the New England coast in search of his favorite source material, Haseltine came to be regarded as one of America's finest marine painters. But instead of continuing with his paintings of the Northeastern coastline, he moved to Italy in 1866 and spent the rest of career painting there and throughout Europe, excepting four years (1895–99).

Haseltine's Italian landscapes, particularly of Capri and Sicily, became popular among the wealthy American tourists who traveled to Europe in increasing numbers after the Civil War. In these works, which were often sent for display in American exhibitions, Haseltine combined his eye for scientific observation with the poetic views of Italy's picturesque ruins, romantic vistas, and profusion of light. The abundance of rocks in the water and the craggy cliffs above in Coast at Sori illustrate Haseltine's abiding interest in geology and intense study of the earth's crust. The warm, almost celestial light that peeks through the clouds and illuminates the medieval tower and cypress trees in the distance reflects the more painterly style that came to dominate Haseltine's later paintings. Yet in this work and others like it, he never completely forwent the realism he learned as a young student at the Düsseldorf School or the aesthetic philosophy of Englishman John Ruskin (1819–1900), whose call for truth in nature greatly affected Haseltine's artistic practice. Coast at Sori simultaneously reveals Haseltine's mastery of technique, his lifelong love of Italy, and profound respect for the natural world.



THOMAS CHAMBERS

1808-1869

Staten Island and the Narrows, mid-19th century
Oil on canvas
22 x 30 inches (55.9 x 76.2 cm)

Provenance

Private collection

When Albert Duveen and Norman Hirschl debuted their exhibition *T. Chambers, Active 1820–1840: First American Modern* in 1942 at the Macbeth Galleries they hailed the "utterly forgotten" Thomas Chambers as "an authentic American artist," notable for his "boldness and spontaneity, his national subject matter, and sense of design." Indeed, this exhibition marked the beginning of the restoration of Chamber's artistic identity and place in the history of American painting; however, it would not be until Kathleen Foster's comprehensive research on the artist was published in her 2008 exhibition catalogue that anyone would be able to answer the question she so poignantly asked, "Who was T. Chambers?"

In his lifetime, Chambers was best known as a marine painter and most often advertised himself as such. Foster speculates that he probably grew up on the English coast or had some experience as a mariner. After immigrating to the United States at some point before March of 1832, when he officially applied for American citizenship, Chambers started painting the more famed shipping vessels and various East Coast harbors, which suggests that he traveled up and down the eastern seaboard for his subject matter. However, Foster astutely suggests through her close study of his many paintings of the same locale, in which specific details are randomly changed, that Chambers probably worked from memory, if he had visited the location at all, or from readily available print sources.2 Thus, Chambers gave the public the illusion that he had seen these places for himself, when in fact he probably did not, but his patrons did not seem to mind his cavalier treatment of the details or his lack of fidelity. Instead, Foster points out that he found a welcome audience in the middle class, who purchased his works as symbols of "local pride, disaster, fame, or adventure" and appreciated Chamber's decorative, often dramatic, painting style.3

In Staten Island and the Narrows Chambers paints a peaceful and harmonious view of the famous shipping lane. Since the artist lived in New York City, he surely had visited and studied the site. Moreover, he painted the view numerous times; yet each version is slightly different, meaning Chambers added and subtracted details or painted the view from different vantage points. Foster argues that Chambers incorporated these subtle and obvious changes "to keep his work interesting" and offer paintings that were "original and unique to each new customer."

Chambers brought his enterprising spirit to his landscape paintings as well as his marines. His body of work as a whole satisfied the desire of a public eager for landscapes that were recognizable and iconic, that were nationalistic and conveyed, as Foster states, "calm prosperity and national solidarity." 5



IO

MARTIN JOHNSON HEADE

1819-1904

Shipwreck, 1865

Oil on canvas

24 x 21 1/4 inches (61 x 54 cm)

Signed lower left: MJ Heade

Inscribed on verso and on stretcher: M.J. Heade / London / 1865

Provenance

Sotheby's, New York, American Paintings, Drawings, and Sculpture, May 23, 2007, lot 131; Private collection; Private collection Upon Martin Johnson Heade's return from his trip to Rio de Janeiro in 1864, he went to London in early 1865 and did not return to the States until late that year. As the inscription on the stretcher of *Shipwreck* reveals, Heade painted the work while he was in London, so it seems reasonable to assume that the scene depicts the English coast.

Heade started painting marine scenes around 1859 and probed the subject extensively until mid-1863. Like his marsh scenes, the artist explored a variety of places in his marines, traveling to Newport and other destinations in Rhode Island and then to Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. Although they represented a relatively short-lived interest for Heade, these paintings of the sea highlight the dramatic changes that were taking place among the vanguard of American marine painters.

Despite Shipwreck's somewhat later date, the unique characteristics of Heade's style and artistic approach to the subject are easily discerned. As with his earliest marine paintings, here Heade emphasizes the presence of the figures on the shore and stresses coloristic unity between land, sea, and sky. He also chooses to depict a gray, stormy day, when the atmospheric effects of the weather and a sense of foreboding are at their height, traits that are similar to his treatment of the subject in his masterwork Approaching Storm from c. 1861–62. This approach was unusual for American artists at the time, as Theodore Stebbins writes in The Life and Works of Martin Johnson Heade: "Heade liked the odd transitory moment when all is not perfect in the world. Whereas another artist would depict the shore at its best, and if there were figures, would decorously dress and pose them, Heade evoked the smells of low tide, the grime of seaweed and mud."1 Indeed, there is a romantic quality to Heade's marine paintings, and Shipwreck in particular, so much so that Stebbins compares these paintings to the work of the great German Romantic painter Casper David Friedrich (1774–1840). While Friedrich probably did not directly influence Heade, the two artists shared an interest in the inevitable passage of time and intangible effects of weather. Stebbins takes this idea even one step further: "Heade was apparently sociable and well-connected, but he traveled the world alone, and his works . . . share with Friedrich's a sense of loneliness and isolation; he surely would have been sympathetic to Friedrich's comment: 'Solitude is essential to my conversation with nature."2



II

HERMANN HERZOG

1832-1932

Sunset

Oil on canvas 15 x 22 inches (38.1 x 55.9 cm) Signed lower left: *H Herzog*

Provenance

Private collection

Like so many of the artists included in this exhibition, Hermann Herzog used travel as an important means by which he expanded his subject matter and enriched his artistic experience. As a student at the Düsseldorf Academy, one of Herzog's teachers Hans Frederick Gude encouraged the young man to travel for artistic inspiration, so he set out to explore the Norwegian wilderness in 1855 and then took subsequent trips to Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, and Italy. As Herzog's expertise developed and his reputation grew among prominent European collectors, he began sending his landscape paintings for exhibition in the United States, namely to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, where he began to see a growing demand for his work.

Sometime in the late 1860s Herzog immigrated to America and settled in Philadelphia, but his avid love of travel did not abate. In 1871 he traveled up the Hudson River on a painting tour; and in 1873 he made the first of many trips out west, starting in Yosemite, then going to Wyoming, Oregon, and down the West Coast to Coronado Island. Later in his career he frequently traveled to Florida, where he executed some of his best-known and collectable paintings. Herzog loved the American wilderness in all of its manifestations and he seems to have genuinely enjoyed the rugged terrain he encountered on his many journeys. Moreover, his romantic and naturalistic painting style was well suited to the boundless subject matter he found in the American landscape. In Painters and the American West, Joan Carpenter Troccoli writes: "In both Europe and the United States, Herzog was a restless seeker of new subjects and he seems to have painted every sort of landscape." During his own lifetime he was hailed in a 1885 review in the Philadelphia Press for "his faculty of catching, all that is characteristic in the motive before him, of choosing the most effective illumination, and even the most favorable season and time of day," which in the reviewer's words amounted to "genius" and made "his pictures unique among landscapes."²

Sunset, one of Herzog's European landscapes, depicts the Lowerzer See, now called Lake Lauerz, in the Swiss canton of Schwyz. The painting is a fine representation of the artist's luminist style, seen through the tight brushwork, subtle gradation of light and tone, and delicate atmosphere. The mirror-like effect Herzog captures in the stillness of the lake was a popular but difficult stylistic conceit to execute, and Herzog manages it dexterously. The contemplative quiescence of the scene is disturbed only by a single eagle that silently glides through the terrain and effectively reminds the viewer of nature's bounty. Despite the fact that Sunset does not depict an American locale, it shares the same transcendental spirit and quiet communion with nature as some of the smaller, more luminist Hudson River School paintings that Barbara Novak calls "classic," "contained," "private," and wholly different from the operatic tours de force that defined an earlier generation.³



THOMAS MORAN

1837-1926

Icebergs, 1909

Oil on canvas 30 x 45 inches (76.2 x II4.3 cm) Signed, inscribed, and dated lower right: *Moran.* 1909

Provenance

Sotheby's, New York, May 27, 1993, lot 176; Alexander Gallery, New York; Private collection since 1993; Michael Altman Fine Art and Advisory Services, New York In April of 1890 on a voyage from New York to Antwerp, Thomas Moran's ship passed an iceberg—an exciting experience that inspired several paintings over the remainder of his artistic career. While aboard the ship, Moran made many pencil sketches of the iceberg that he later used as studies for his full-scale paintings. He tried to record as many details as he could in these rapid sketches, and those observations that he could not commit to paper fast enough he wrote down, such as "water pouring over the sides of berg... Deep blue water with great rollers capped with foam." This description almost seems to come to life in his 1909 canvas titled *Icebergs*.

The painting brilliantly captures Moran's indefatigable spirit of adventure and profound reverence for the power of nature. The monumental effect of the work evokes a visceral response in the viewer, as if he or she was on the ship with Moran as it bravely navigated past the icebergs through the roiling water. Moran dazzled his viewers through his handling of the dramatic atmospheric effects and evocation of the earthly and supernatural, beautiful and sublime. *Icebergs* recalls a time when such experiences were accessible to only the few men brave enough to face great risk and danger in the name of travel and adventure.

It seems likely that Moran recalled Frederic Church's famous 1861 painting of the icebergs of Labrador. However, Moran's treatment of the subject owes more to the influence of English artist Joseph Mallord William Turner's (1775-1851) dramatic impressions of nature than to Church's cool precision and scientific accuracy. Indeed, Turner's fantastical, almost abstract landscapes from the early nineteenth century had a profound impact on Moran's artistic style. The two artists shared in the belief that a successful landscape painting offered a viewer a powerful impression of nature, and Moran was one of the few American artists who came to use surface effect and a theatrical handling of the paint medium to communicate his passion for his subject. But whereas Turner painted composite views, often combining elements from completely unrelated landscapes into one composition, Moran upheld greater fidelity to the actual appearance of a sight. He did not, however, simply record the natural world, but rather maintained his commitment to presenting nature as an expression of God's divine omnipotence and America's greatness throughout his long and illustrious career.



EDWARD MORAN

1829–1901

Off Sandy Hook

Oil on canvas 20 x 16 inches (50.8 x 40.6 cm) Signed lower left: *E. Moran* Unlike his younger brother Thomas, Edward Moran did not travel to the far reaches of the American continent for his subject matter. Instead he remained close to the Northeastern coast and chose to focus on maritime painting, in which he combined his love of clarity and scientific accuracy with a strong sense of action and adventure.

Moran first started painting after moving from Maryland to Philadelphia. There he came under the tutelage of James Hamilton, a prominent Irish-born marine painter, who was known for the silvery tones and loose accents of light in his paintings. The thriving clipper ship production in Philadelphia acted as a constant source of inspiration for Moran. In 1847, however, Edward and his brother Thomas set sail for England, where both artists would further their artistic training at the Royal Academy and encounter the work of J.M.W. Turner. Turner's influence on both Morans was great, in that they responded to the English artist's taste for dramatic compositions and adroit treatment of light. However, the elder Moran chose fidelity and accuracy over handsome atmospheric effects, and throughout his career he painted his scenes with precision and refinement.

Off Sandy Hook was probably painted after 1872 when Moran settled in New York City, where he spent the remainder of his life. The attention to detail and painterly brushwork mark the artist's mature painting style and some of his best work. He dramatically captures the effects of the storm without obscuring them under a veil of atmospheric haze. Indeed, his brushwork remains smooth and tight without appearing too controlled or contrived. As with most of Moran's marine paintings he chooses a nearby locale, in this case Sandy Hook, which is just outside New York Harbor, and infuses it with dramatic action and heroic spirit. Moran, therefore, did not need to travel far to appeal to his collectors' taste for adventure.



WILLIAM TROST RICHARDS

1833-1905

Newport

Oil on panel $5 \frac{1}{2} \times 9 \frac{1}{4}$ inches (14 x 23.5 cm) Signed lower left: WTR

Provenance

Estate of the artist; Anna Richards Brewster, the artist's daughter; Spanierman Gallery, New York; Private collection, West Coast; Phillips, dePury and Luxembourg, May 21, 2002, lot 16; Private collection, Michigan William Trost Richards spent his first summer in Newport in 1874, and filled many days exploring the landscape and making sketches. The area captivated the artist, as it had for John Frederick Kensett, Martin Johnson Heade, and Worthington Whittredge before him. In a letter to his patron George Whitney, Richards wrote: "I have made some new walks and discovered new beauties, and beleive (sic) that I could from Newport Scenery make more charming pictures than I have ever dreamed of before."

It is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the exact location of his small oil sketch Newport. An initial visual comparison suggests interesting similarities between it and Richards's large 1875 canvas Old Orchards at Newport. But the wild and rambling terrain of the sketch also bears a strong resemblance to the area around Lily Pond or Mantunuck. No matter where the sight of the sketch is, it seems clear that Richards executed it during the first few summers he resided in Newport, when the new landscape held its greatest wonder for the artist. Indeed, it was his foremost intention to use his paintings as the means by which he conveyed "the spirit" of Newport. Linda Ferber in William Trost Richards: American Landscape & Marine Painter, 1833—1905, writes: "Newport topography, which he studied so carefully, held much more than just picturesque appeal for Richards, for his perception of nature was still steeped in a romanticism that divined a spiritual significance behind the appearance of reality."²

In his paintings of Newport and those works that came before and after them, Richards combined his deep reverence for the natural world with an assiduous study of nature itself. His attention to geologic specificity and scientific accuracy and his unfailing truth to nature, as prescribed by John Ruskin, greatly informed his artistic technique and choice of subject matter. The small plein-air sketches he executed, like Newport, reveal a wonderful sense of directness and remarkable handling light and atmosphere. In them, he combined precision with feeling to great effect, which aided him in painting the larger canvases he worked on during the winter months in his Germantown studio.



THOMAS MORAN

1837-1926

Monterey Coast, 1912

Oil on canvas 30 x 40 inches (76.2 x 101.6 cm) Signed and dated lower left: *Moran 1912*

Provenance

Duncan C. Dusenbury, Portville, New York; Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York, October 27, 1977, lot 139; Mr. and Mrs. George Arden; Christie's, New York, May 22, 1991, lot 131; Western collection; Sotheby's, New York, December 1, 1999; Estate of Leonard Green; Sotheby's, New York, November 30, 2005, lot 191; Private collection Even after fifty years of painting the American landscape during numerous journeys from east to west, Thomas Moran never tired of the subject. He felt a strong sense of obligation that American artists should paint their own country, going so far as to say "there was little need of American landscape painters going abroad in search of the grand, the sublime, and the beautiful . . . There is no phase of landscape in which we are not richer, more varied and interesting than any country in the world." Despite the fact that the taste for Impressionism had long supplanted the Hudson River School painters' artistic style, Moran enjoyed considerable renown until his death. He kept a rigorous travel schedule even until the last year of his life and maintained his firm belief in the singular majesty of his homeland. In 1911 he told a reporter from the New York World: "I looked at the Alps, but they are nothing compared to the majestic grandeur of our wonderful Rockies. I have painted them all my life and I shall continue to paint them as long as I can hold a brush. I am working as hard as I ever did . . . I go to California in the autumn. There I will paint all winter."

Monterey Coast is among the group of paintings of the California coast Moran completed during that winter of 1912. Whereas other artists who had achieved his level of success and fame might have rested on their laurels, Moran kept painting and traveling in order to collect images and ideas for his body of work. The stunning beauty of the California coastline provided Moran with ample opportunity to exercise the keen powers of observation and expert technique that marked his most groundbreaking paintings decades earlier. Here he treats the landscape with the same sense of poetry and refinement and still brings to his viewers a scene that many would not have witnessed for themselves. He was indeed a "pioneer" as Frederick W. Morton called him in a 1900 article for the Brush and Pencil. His "rich, almost exotic imagination" lent itself perfectly to the remote regions of America that he so bravely explored.2 And almost one hundred years later Nancy K. Anderson in Thomas Moran wrote: "Self cast as an artist/pilgrim in wondrous but difficult landscapes, Moran created images that were born as much of imagination as of experience."3 Never one to merely report a description of the landscape, Moran took his viewers there with him and in doing so changed the way they thought about their country.



WINSLOW HOMER

1836-1910

Schooners at Anchor, 1880

Watercolor on paper 9 x 12³/₄ inches (22.9 x 32.4 cm) Signed and dated lower left: Winslow Homer 1880

Provenance

Mrs. Samuel Fleet Speir, before 1911; By descent to Genevieve A. Rounds (Mrs. Wellington Rounds); Milch Galleries, New York, 1957; George W. Volkel, Westfield, New Jersey, 1957; Swain's Art Store, Plainfield, New Jersey, c. 1966; Private collection, Scotch Plains, New Jersey, 1966; Spanierman Galleries, New York; Questroyal Fine Art, New York; Private collection

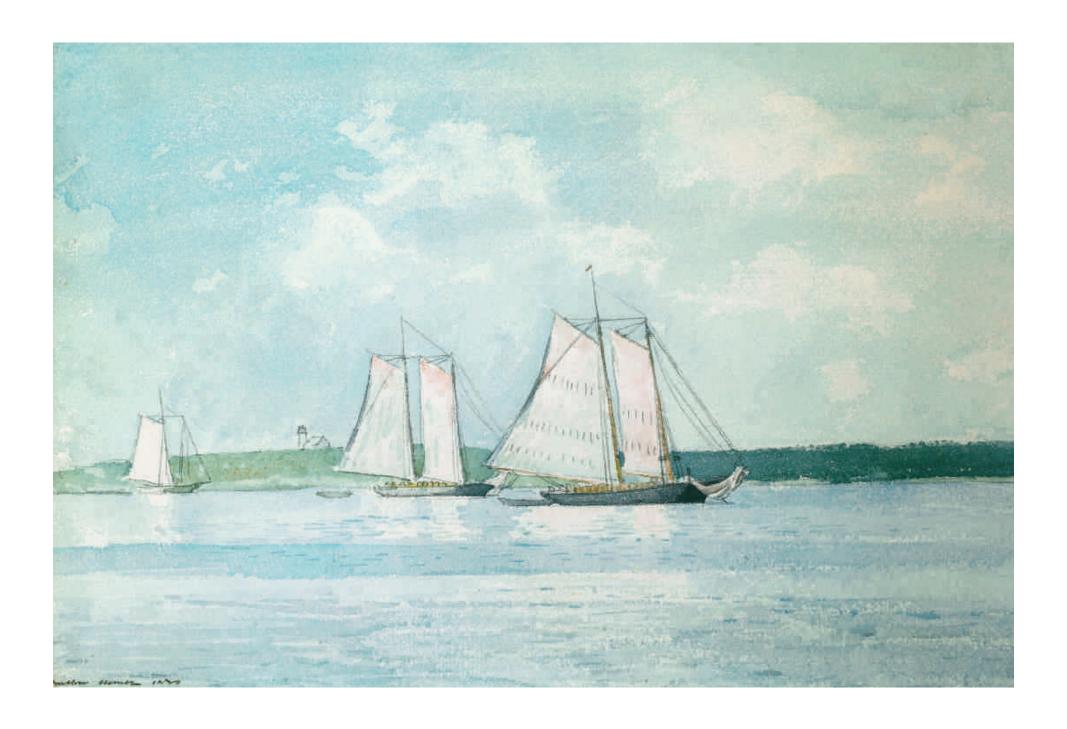
Winslow Homer's restless curiosity, profound love of nature, and enterprising character propelled his lifelong interest in travel. Whether he was in Gloucester, the Adirondacks, Maine, or Bermuda, the artist used his exceptional artistic talent to brilliantly capture the spirit of a place. His use of watercolor was ideal for traveling, and his superb handling of the medium allowed him to convey the intensity of his experiences in nature and the immediacy of a particular location's light and color. In Watercolors by Winslow Homer, Martha Tedeschi writes: "Travel compelled him to see and paint new environments, to shift his color palette, and to

expand his range of subjects; in many ways it became his ongoing education, a way to expand himself as an artist and to realize his themes in new circumstances."

There's no question that one of the principle themes of Homer's career was nostalgia and the way it related to the American landscape. While his style and choice of subject were markedly different from the Hudson River School artists, his belief that nature was "elemental" and at the "heart of American culture," as Theodore Stebbins writes, puts him squarely in line with their beliefs in the role of art.² That said, the heightened spiritual component and monumental scale of the more operatic Hudson River School paintings did not apply to Homer's presentation of nature. Instead his observations yielded quiet, even humble, depictions of the landscape or sunny, idyllic views that harkened back to a simpler time.

Homer first visited Gloucester, Massachusetts in the summer of 1873. He returned in 1880 to work in the quiet seclusion of Ten Pound Island, a tiny islet in Gloucester Harbor. The town had become a popular tourist destination by 1880, but Homer eschewed the bustle of the crowds and rented a room away from the center of town. This isolation had a positive impact on his artistic output and allowed him to experiment and further develop his watercolor technique.³

Schooners at Anchor, which was painted in Gloucester in 1880, demonstrates Homer's evolving mastery of the watercolor medium and his ability to respond to and capture the look and feel of this particular place. The freshness and vitality of his handling of the light in the sea and sky heighten the overall sense of wellness and beneficial effects of being outdoors. This work and most of Homer's watercolors of the American landscape satisfied the need for a different, and one might argue more modern, expression of national identity in art. Gail Davidson writes: "He, like Church, traveled to remote locations for his artwork, but he was searching less for divine confirmation than a decent resort . . . His images captured the eyes and imaginations of the independent and active readers of periodicals . . . and accounts of resort areas." As leisure, sportsmanship, health, and tourism came to greater define Americans' idea of themselves, Homer responded with dexterously executed images of his country's good citizens and spectacular landscape, which beckoned many of his viewers to get outside and see America for themselves.



CHILDE HASSAM

1859-1935

Isles of Shoals, 1903

Watercolor on paper 6 ½ x 9 inches (16.5 x 22.9 cm) Signed and dated lower left: Childe Hassam 1903

Provenance

Private collection, Pennsylvania

Similar to some of the other artists included in this exhibition, Childe Hassam's travels throughout his career provided him with ample opportunity to familiarize himself with the latest trends in painting and exchange ideas with other artists. Whether he was in France, New York City, New England, or California, Hassam used his immediate surroundings as his principle subject matter and modified his technique to suit the locale and the circumstances. He most often painted from life *en plein air* and used his deft brushwork, keen observations of light, and understanding of composition to capture the essence of a place.

The Isles of Shoals, a remote resort ten miles east of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, were one of Hassam's favorite places to visit from his first trip there in 1883 until around 1916. Celia Thaxter, a friend from Boston, owned a summerhouse on Appledore, the largest of the isles, and encouraged Hassam to join her there. After his initial trip in 1883, he made extended excursions to the isles in the summers of 1890–93 and took Thaxter's spectacular seaside garden as his principle subject. After Thaxter died in August of 1894, and Hassam returned to the isles in 1895 he devoted the majority of his attention to painting the rugged coastline. The style of these works has most often been compared that of Claude Monet (1840–1926), yet there are obvious differences. Hassam executed this small watercolor, simply titled *Isles of Shoals*, in 1903. It demonstrates the influence of Monet's broken brushwork and blurring of detail, but maintains Hassam's interest in structural clarity and realistic, legible space. In Hassam's hands the landscape remains intact and does not dissolve into abstraction.

Hassam's sojourns on the Isles of Shoals inspired almost ten percent of his artistic output, making the destination central to his stylistic development and one of his most important subjects. These paintings were as much artistic experiments as they were testimony to the changing taste of the American public. As tourism and leisure came to characterize some of the more popular aspects of the nation's identity, Americans sought works of art that captured these favored pastimes. Hassam's landscapes from the Isles the Shoals, and his many travels for that matter, fulfilled that desire by portraying the natural world as something familiar to be enjoyed. The wilderness and sense of awe that the painters of the Hudson River School so loved to capture is long gone in the paintings of Hassam and his contemporaries. Indeed, as Americans grew increasingly interested in rediscovering their colonial past in the 1890s and early 1900s, they turned their sights away from frontierism and responded more to the nostalgia for simpler times that Hassam so beautifully painted.



MAURICE PRENDERGAST

1858-1924

Café de la Paix, c. 1893–94

Watercolor on paper 20 1/4 x 12 1/2 inches (51.4 x 31.8 cm) Signed lower right: *Prendergast*

Provenance

The artist; Charles Prendergast, 1924; Mrs. Charles Prendergast, 1948; Kraushaar Galleries, New York; Mrs. Alexander Albert, 1956; Mrs. Tobin Clark; Sotheby's, New York, April 19–20, 1972, lot 18; Private collection; Private collection

Exhibitions

Kraushaar Galleries, New York, Maurice Prendergast: Paintings and Watercolors of Chartres, Dieppe, Treport, Paris, St. Malo, November 13—December 9, 1944; Farnsworth Museum, Wellesley College, Wellesley, Mass., Masters of American Watercolor, October 16—November 20, 1949; Palm Beach Art League, Masters of Watercolor: Marin, Demuth, Prendergast, February 3—26, 1950; Knoedler, New York, Americans Abroad, March 22—April 22, 1954.

Literature

Hedley Howell Rhys, "Maurice Prendergast: The Sources and Development of His Style," Ph.D diss. (Harvard University, 1952), pp. 63–66, 169; Sotheby's, New York, Traditional and Western American Paintings, Drawings, Watercolors, Sculpture, and Illustrations of the 18th, 19th, and early 20th Centuries, April 19–20, 1972; Carol Clark, Nancy Mowll Mathews, and Gwendolyn Owens, Maurice Brazil Prendergast, Charles Prendergast: Catalogue Raisonné (Williamstown and Munich: Williams College Museum of Art and Prestel-Verlag), p. 347, cat. 584.

Maurice Prendergast's regular trips to Europe provided him with ample subject matter and most notably significant creative challenges. He used his close study of European modernist trends as the means by which he steered the course of his own unique artistic style and introduced the American public to a new way of experiencing modern painting.

Through his travels to France and Italy in particular and willingness to apply his novel way of seeing and painting to historic and time-honored European sites, Prendergast offered his American collectors some of the most "interesting," "unconventional," and "distinct" views of Europe they had ever seen. He, of course, also applied his singular artistic vision to the many American subjects he painted and made them "sparkle with movement and daring." ²

Prendergast painted Café de la Paix around 1893–94, when the artist was still living and studying in Paris. He had enrolled in the Acádemie Julian and Acádemie Colarossi in 1891 with the goal of becoming a fine artist, after leaving his career as an advertising sign painter in Boston. Prendergast quickly absorbed the new painting styles he encountered in Paris, but even early in his artistic development his style was always his own and never merely derivative. The arresting view the artist chose for Café de la Paix, one that peers down the long row of café tables, speaks to the ease with which he painted complicated compositions. Prendergast would further explore and refine the abstract handling of the forms, deft brushwork, and bold color he employs here in later works of Boston-area beaches, Italy, and New York.

The scene of modern Parisian life captured in Café de la Paix, complete with all of the accoutrements of fashionable living, thrilled Prendergast, and his masterful technique was perfectly suited to capturing its vitality. Prendergast's drive to expose this manner of living to the American public upon his return to the States happily coincided with a shift in the way Americans thought about recreation and leisure. The country was in the process of redefining itself as a paragon of industrial strength and unprecedented wealth, and Americans began looking for their likenesses in portraits, landscapes, and genre scenes that exemplified their genteel and fashionable lifestyle. Prendergast's paintings did and did not respond to this directive. One the one hand his complex and lively paintings of Boston, Italy and New York were thought of as emblems of the modern city. On the other hand as Prendergast's style became more abstract and in effect more modern his work appeared radical, even alienating to some. Both of these viewpoints reveal how profoundly Prendergast's experiences with modern European painting affected him and his imaging of the many landscapes he painted throughout his career.



PAUL CORNOYER

1864-1923

Cheyne Walk and All Saints Church, London

Oil on canvas 18 ¼ x 24 inches (46.4 x 61 cm) Signed lower left: *Paul Cornoyer* Best known for his paintings of New York City and its suburbs, Paul Cornoyer also did a fair amount of traveling through Europe while he was living and studying in Paris from 1889 to 1894. He was greatly influenced by French Barbizon painting early in his career and then by Impressionism while he was living abroad. Inspired by his experiences and training in Europe, Cornoyer moved back to his native St. Louis in 1894 and worked on developing his signature tonal-impressionist style. In 1899 the great champion of American painting, William Merritt Chase (1849–1916), who was also a collector of Cornoyer's work, encouraged the artist to come to New York. Upon his arrival he was immediately mesmerized by the city and took it as his principle subject, painting its many sights at various times of day and in all kinds of weather. Cornoyer's numerous portrayals of the city became increasingly popular among collectors and earned the artist wide acclaim.

It is difficult to determine when Cornoyer painted Cheyne Walk and All Saints Church, London, as it is unclear when and if he returned to Europe after his initial studies in Paris. Cheyne Walk and All Saints, or as it is now called Chelsea Old Church, are two important historic monuments in Chelsea. There has been a church on the site since the earliest time of Christianity in England. The chancel dates from the thirteenth century and the nave and tower from 1670. The south chapel was Sir Thomas Moore's private chapel in the mid-1550s. During the Blitz of World War II the church was nearly destroyed and today looks quite different from the way Cornoyer pictured it here. Cheyne Walk is equally historic. Before the nineteenth century the houses that lined the lane fronted the banks of the River Thames. Such cultural luminaries as J.M.W. Turner, George Eliot (1819–1880), Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–1882), James McNeil Whistler (1834–1903), and Henry James (1843–1916) all lived on the walk at various times in their lives. Clearly Cornoyer understood the historical and cultural significance of the place, and he probably knew that the painting would be desirable to a collector with ties to England.

Stylistically, Cheyne Walk and All Saints Church exhibits the characteristics that mark the artist's best work. The atmospheric, almost hazy quality of the composition is very much in keeping with Cornoyer's preferred method of painting. This in concert with the limited palette gives the scene a quiet, almost still, mood. As in all of Cornoyer's cityscapes, he adeptly captures a moment in time and offers his contemporary viewer a glimpse of city life from over a century past.



RICHARD HAYLEY LEVER

1876-1958

Nantucket Yachting Season, 1920

Oil on board 10 x 12 inches (25.4 x 30.5 cm) Signed lower right: *Hayley Lever*

Provenance

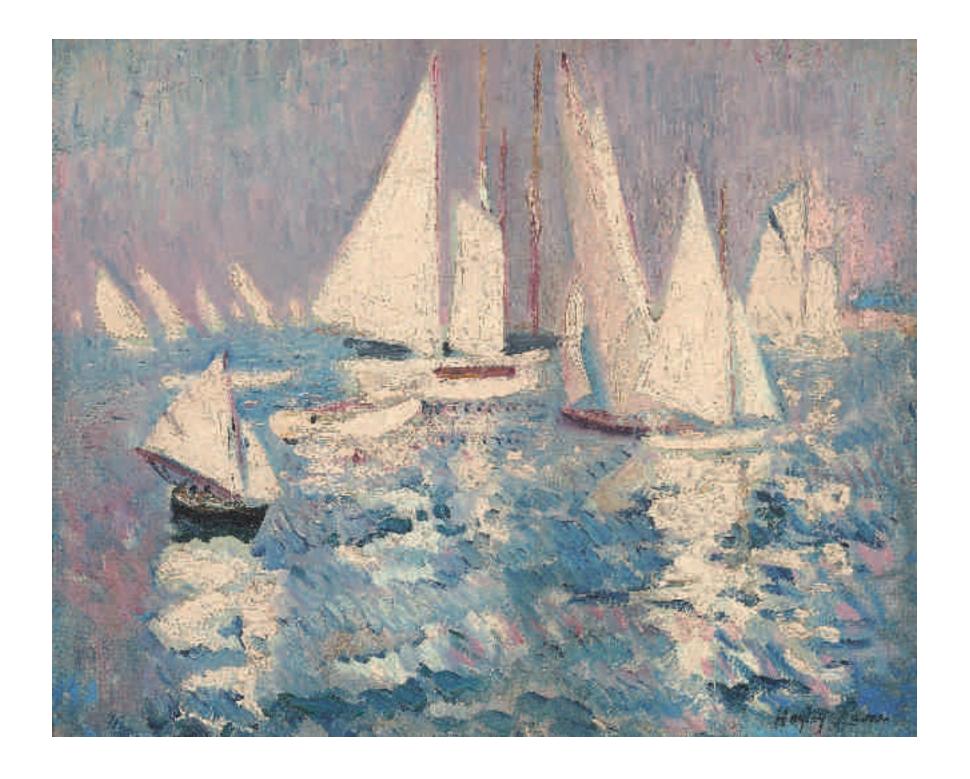
Private collection

Richard Hayley Lever, commonly known as Hayley Lever, spent the early part of his career in the artist's colony of St. Ives in Cornwall, England. While he was residing there, he took several painting excursions to such coastal towns in France as Dieppe, Honfleur, and Concarneau. During one 1908 trip to the Continent, Lever saw the work of Vincent Van Gogh (1853–1890) for the first time; the experience marked a significant turning point in his artistic development, as Lever became deeply influenced by Van Gogh's use of vivid color and strong compositional techniques.

In 1911 Lever's friend and fellow artist Ernest Lawson (1873–1939), whom he met in France, encouraged him to move to New York. After his arrival, Lever began exhibiting consistently at the National Academy of Design and befriended artists Robert Henri (1865–1929) and George Bellows (1882–1925). In 1915 Lever took his first trip to Gloucester, Massachusetts, which was by then a popular resort town and thriving artists' community. Its topographical similarities to St. Ives surely made an impression on Lever, as they did for the many other artists who knew both locales intimately. During his sojourns in Gloucester and the numerous trips he took all over the New England coast from Nantucket to Nova Scotia, Lever took seascapes and town-shore land-scapes as his principle subject matter.

From his early work in St. Ives and France, Lever was drawn to painting the coast, and the New England shore provided him with ample opportunity to explore his interest. In Nantucket Yachting Season, Lever demonstrates his unique handling of broken brushstrokes and marvelous sense of color. The pleasing mix of delicate pastels and whites comes alive through Lever's energetic, almost coarse, brushwork. He builds up the surface of the canvas with layers of paint, giving the work an almost tactile quality. The strong lines of the sailboats' masts and the fact that they point in a number of directions increase the complexity of the composition and perhaps most reveal the long-lasting influence of Van Gogh.

By 1920 when this painting was executed, American modernism had firmly taken root. Lever's awareness of its technical strategies comes through in his abstract handling of the composition and all-over surface effect. Yet unlike many of his contemporaries he did not forgo representation for abstraction, and as the American art market changed, particularly during the Great Depression, Lever's pleasant paintings of the New England coastline declined in popularity. But today, almost one hundred years later, they capture the spirit of a time and place that have long since changed.



BIRGE LOVELL HARRISON

1854-1929

Sunset from Quebec

Oil on board 25 ½ x 30 ¼ inches (63.5 x 76.2 cm) Signed lower left: *Birge Harrison*

Provenance

Private collection

Exhibition

Retrospective Exhibition of Painting by Alexander Harrison and Birge Harrison. The Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, Albright Art Gallery, New York, September 10—October 6, 1913; Art Institute of Chicago, October 10-November 3, 1913; City Art Museum, St. Louis, November 7-December 31, 1913; Detroit Museum of Art, January 1914; Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, February 1914; National Academy of Design, New York, May 1914.

Birge Harrison's great love of travel brought him to Europe, Canada, Australia, India, and the Middle East. His work as an illustrator for *Scribner's*, *Harper's*, and the *Atlantic Monthly* took him to the more exotic locales he visited, and his own spirit of adventure and intellectual curiosity drove him to keep exploring throughout his career. In his 1920 book *Landscape Painting* Harrison beseeched his artist/reader to "Be courageous! Always dare to the limit of your knowledge and just a little beyond." He certainly lived by this credo himself. The extent of his travels and subsequent exposure to a variety of artists and their philosophies kept his own work fresh and original.

One of Harrison's favorite places to paint was Quebec, as he loved winter scenes and relished the opportunity to express the effects of light on snow and ice. Of Quebec he said: "I've painted pretty much all over the world, but nowhere have I found such a mine of exquisite material for the painter. May it never be spoiled!" In Sunset from Quebec we see what Harrison means for ourselves. He takes a view of the frozen inlet that simultaneously captures the unspoiled landscape but also includes a strong human presence. Yet in Harrison's hands the billowing smoke of the snow-covered buildings appears more picturesque than menacing.

As a leading Tonalist, Harrison used a muted palette to create the strong sense of atmosphere he preferred in his works. In Sunset from Quebec, the lavenders, periwinkles, and grays all work together with the whites to create a painting that captures the look of the landscape and the artist's mood. That it is pensive and quiet reflects Harrison's desire to create works of art that evoked emotion. He was more interested in capturing the feeling of a place rather than its details. The openness of the composition in Sunset from Quebec and the barrenness of the winter landscape evoke a sense of transience, as if this scene although fixed in time on Harrison's canvas was but a brief moment in life. Indeed, the kind of artistic vision Harrison achieved in this work is not that of an all-seeing, Emersonian "transparent eyeball," but rather a modern subject that was constantly in flux as the light changed and the smoke rolled past.



ARTHUR B. CARLES

1882-1952

Venetian Gondolas, c. 1909

Oil on canvas 25 x 24 inches (63.5 x 61 cm)

Provenance

Hollis Taggart Galleries, New York; Richard and Kay Tarr

Exhibition

Hollis Taggart Galleries, New York; Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia, The Orchestration of Color: The Paintings of Arthur B. Carles, February—June 2000.

Literature

Barbara Ann Boese Wolanin, "The Orchestration of Color: The Paintings of Arthur B. Carles," in Hollis Taggart Galleries, *The Orchestration of Color: The Paintings of Arthur B. Carles*, exh. cat. (New York: Hollis Taggart Galleries, 2000), p. 38, cat. 15.

Perhaps more than any other artist in this exhibition Arthur Carles's numerous trips to Europe inspired him most about how to paint. In 1907, after graduating from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Carles went to Europe for the first time on a two-year scholarship. He remarked to a friend that upon his arrival in Paris he felt like an "open-minded sponge," absorbing everything he was seeing and experiencing as a young artist in the French capital.

Over the course of this first trip to France, Carles's excursions into the French countryside provided him with ample material for the plein-air sketches he called "squirts." Rapidly executed and deftly composed, these small oil paintings acted as great exercises in capturing the light and rich color of the landscape. They also allowed Carles to freely experiment with the new modes of painting he saw in the work of Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) and Henri Matisse (1869–1954)—two artists who would exert great influence on Carles's developing artistic style. Indeed, the understanding of color and its relationship to form and expression that Carles learned during this first trip to France would inform his approach to painting for the rest of his career.

Carles probably painted *Venetian Gondolas* on a 1909 trip to Italy. Like the small landscapes from this early period, the artist's interest in strong color and abstract, flat shapes make the painting strikingly modern. Barbara Wolnanin in *The Orchestration of Color* states of *Venetian Gondolas* that the paint appears to have been applied quickly, as if Carles had started an underpainting but then stopped when he liked what he had done.² His willingness to experiment and try fresh approaches to painting, particularly with regard to his bold use of color, would become a hallmark of Carles's mature style, and we see it taking shape here. Clearly, this early experience in Europe, and numerous later trips to France as well, profoundly affected Carles's working method and aesthetic philosophy. The influence his paintings had on a later generation of American modernists owes a great deal to his initial encounters with the European avantgarde, and Carles's desire to bring their innovation and originality back to the States decisively affected the future of American painting.



MARSDEN HARTLEY

1877-1943

Cerise Cactus, c. 1919

Oil on canvas 35 ½ x 22 ½ inches (90.2 x 57.2 cm)

Provenance

Passedoit Gallery, New York; Douglas Drake Gallery, New York; Terry Dintenfass Gallery, New York; Gerald Peters Gallery, New York; Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, New York; Alexander Gallery, New York; Babcock Galleries, New York; Acquired by the present owner from the above, 2004; Sotheby's, American Paintings, Drawings & Sculpture, December 3, 2008, lot 73; Michael Altman Fine Art and Advisory Services, New York

Exhibition

New York, Alexander Gallery, New Mexico 1918–1920: An American Discovering America, March—April 2003.

Marsden Hartley's nomadic life was driven in part by his relentless pursuit of new material and inspiration. He was constantly reinventing himself as an artist and often the spirit of a new place profoundly affected the course he decided to take. Upon traveling to or arriving at a new location, whether it was New York, Berlin, Provincetown, or New Mexico, Hartley habitually idealized it, but ultimately grew disillusioned and then moved on. In spite of this restlessness, nature acted as his faithful

muse, and his work often spoke to his interest in transcendental spirituality. "The inherent magic in the appearance of the world about me, engrossed and amazed me," he wrote. "No cloud or blossom or bird or human ever escaped me." Hartley frequently used his experiences in the many places he visited and painted as a gateway to a greater, more original artistic expression.

World War I marked a decisive moment in Hartley's life and career. He went to Europe for the first time in 1912 and was deeply affected by European modernism and its practitioners; however, by 1915 the war had made living in Europe impossible, particularly because Hartley lost his lover, the German officer Karl von Freyburg, in battle. Thus Hartley returned to the States in that year and later wrote of the experience: "Art like life has had to begin all over again, for the very end of the world had been made visible at last." 2

After brief stays in Provincetown and Bermuda, Hartley decided to go to New Mexico in 1918 in the hope of making new, authentic American art from his study of the Southwestern landscape. His goal was to develop an aesthetic drawn purely from what was seen—an American artist experiencing the American landscape and creating truly American works of art, devoid of outside influence. For Hartley, the theory proved difficult to practice, as depression, dislocation, and illness prevented him from connecting with the New Mexico landscape and his goal at large. Yet unlike the many other places Hartley painted, he revisited the subject many times throughout 1918–24, which clearly indicates its importance to him.³

Cerise Cactus from around 1919 is part of a group of still lifes that were inspired by the artist's stay in New Mexico, but probably painted in New York after Hartley returned to the city. Heather Hole in Marsden Hartley and the West argues that paintings like Cerise Cactus speak to the loneliness, alienation, and secret longing that Hartley often felt as a semi-closeted gay man. She also postulates that their disconnectedness from the landscape in that the plants are potted and unto themselves perhaps indicates Hartley's disillusionment with his idea for the body of work from New Mexico as a whole. Indeed there is something dark and foreboding about the shadow and the way it encroaches on the cactus itself. Whether or not Hartley was pleased with the outcome of these paintings matters less to us now, as they poignantly capture an important period in the artist's career and also speak to the American modernist's quest for originality in the distinctly American landscape.



EDWARD WILLIS REDFIELD

1869-1965

The Bowdoin, Monhegan Island

Oil on canvas 26 x 32 inches (66 x 81.3 cm) Signed lower left: *E.W. Redfield*

Provenance

D. Wigmore Fine Art, New York; Private collection, 1987

Exhibition

William Penn Memorial Museum, Harrisburg, Edward W. Redfield NA: 1869— 1965. Retrospective Exhibition of the Work of the Great American Impressionist, Edward Willis Redfield of Pennsylvania, March 31—May 13, 1973. Best known for his distinctive landscape paintings of Bucks County, Pennsylvania and coastal Maine, Edward Redfield's love of painting en plein air was born in the French forest of Fontainebleau. He and Robert Henri traveled to Paris together around 1889 and enrolled in the Acádemie Julian and Ecole des Beaux-Arts. In addition to his formal studies, Redfield took numerous trips to Fontainebleau and around the French countryside, where he practiced landscape painting and consequently initiated his lifelong love of working outdoors. His experiences in France decisively affected his understanding of composition and prompted him to develop a more personal approach to painting; however, the culmination of his training and evolution of his mature style would not fully take hold of his work until he turned his attention to the American landscape.

Although Redfield did not travel extensively throughout the United States for his subject matter, he left no stone of Bucks County or Monhegan and Boothbay Harbor, Maine unturned. Redfield extensively explored these areas in search of compelling and recognizable sights to paint; he relished working out of doors for hours in all kinds of weather, and his mature paintings demonstrate the vigor, authenticity, and distinct national character that critics and collectors hailed him for. In 1910 one critic remarked, "among the men who have done the most to infuse an authentic note of nationalism into contemporary American art, Edward Redfield occupies a prominent position. He is the standard bearer of that progressive group of painters who are glorifying American landscape painting with a veracity and force that is astonishing the eyes of the Old World."

In The Bowdoin, Monhegan Island, we see these words come to life. Never one to assign spiritual or even poetic meaning to his works, Redfield painted the landscape as he saw it, as a vast array of color, texture, and light. Here he used heavy impasto and vigorous brushwork to communicate the energy and physicality of the scene. By painting the canvas "in clear and immediate terms" as Constance Kimmerle wrote, Redfield in effect "dissolved the boundaries between man and nature." His visceral treatment of the subject was particularly appropriate for his painting of the Bowdoin. As Maine's official sailing vessel, the eighty-eight foot schooner was a symbol of great strength and national pride, as she was built to withstand the perils of Arctic exploration and made at least twenty-eight trips above the Arctic Circle during her time. In choosing the Bowdoin and Monhegan Harbor as the subjects of this work and painting them with his signature artistic style, Redfield made a strong statement about the American landscape. In a word, he celebrated it, by infusing the painting with life, originality, and nationalism.



WALTER ELMER SCHOFIELD

1867-1944

Village in Devon, c. 1933

Oil on canvas 40 x 48 inches (101.6 x 121.9 cm) Signed lower right: Schofield

Provenance

Lee and Barbara Maimon; Private collection

Literature

Brian Peterson, ed., Pennsylvania Impressionism (Doylestown, Pa.: The James A. Michener Museum; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), p. 234. Walter Schofield's restless spirit compelled him to move around freely and frequently throughout his life. As an adult, he crossed the Atlantic over forty times between 1902 and 1937. No sooner would he arrive in one place before it was time to pack up and move on to the next. As a young artist Schofield traveled to Europe in 1892 and again in 1895. While there, he was exposed to French Impressionism and Dutch landscape painting for the first time and developed a deep enthusiasm for both in addition to the practice of working en plein air. Upon his return to the States in 1897, he began painting snow scenes, but would not arrive at the bold, vigorous style of his mature landscapes until the early 1900s, after he and his wife moved to the artists' colony of St. Ives in England. Following this move, Schofield divided his time between England and the United States, spending October through April in America, painting his rural landscapes mostly of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. In subsequent trips back to America, Schofield took extended trips to California, Arizona, and New Mexico, where he painted scenes of the American West. However, his most acclaimed work evolved from his landscapes of Pennsylvania and St. Ives.

"The landscape painter is, of necessity, an outdoors man," wrote Schofield. "For vitality and convincing quality only come to the man who serves, not in the studio, but out in the open where even the things he fights against strengthen him, because you see, nature is always vital, even in her implicit moods, and never denies a vision to the real lover." Schofield's strong feelings about the act of landscape painting drove his unique way of seeing and experiencing the natural world. His contemporaries praised the vigor of his style as essentially American and lauded his willingness to completely immerse himself in his subject.

Although Village in Devon is not an American scene it is an outstanding example of the artistic vision that guided Schofield throughout his career. The bold palette of blues and greens, strong shadows and light, and broad brushwork all give the painting great energy, as if the little town is vibrating with life. The complexity of the composition and bird's-eye view work together to flatten the picture surface, giving it an abstract and modern feel. Schofield does not merely record what he sees, he interprets it and distills it through the filter of his own artistic experience. Surely his great love of landscape painting combined with his openness to new experiences and ways of seeing informed his aesthetic decisions and affected his artistic development. One cannot help but wonder what Schofield's paintings would have looked like had he stayed in Pennsylvania and not ventured out into the world.



MARSDEN HARTLEY

1877-1943

Storm Wave, 1939-40

Oil on board 18 x 24 inches (45.7 x 60.9 cm)

Provenance

Estate of the artist; Paul Rosenberg & Co., New York; Acquired from the above, 1955; Sotheby's, New York, December I, 2004, lot 10; Private collection

Exhibitions

Alfred Valente Gallery, New York, Marsden Hartley, September—November 1960, no. 16; The Brooklyn Museum; Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, American Painting: Selections from the Collection of Daniel and Rita Fraad, June—November 1964.

Literature

Volume of Photographs of Paintings, Pastels and Drawings from the Estate of Marsden Hartley, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., no. 198. After a lifetime of traveling from place to place in search of originality and authenticity, in the late 1930s Marsden Hartley increasingly turned to painting the landscape of his native Maine. Unlike his works from New Mexico (see cat. 23) and other locations after his return from Europe in 1915, the Maine scenes were more critically successful. Until recently scholars have argued that the achievement of the Maine paintings was related to Hartley's deep connection to the place; however, Heather Hole points out that this idea was largely the narrative of Alfred Stieglitz (1864–1946), the great arbiter of American modernism and Hartley's longtime dealer. While there is no denying the excellence of the Maine scenes and Hartley's own admission of his profound relationship to the landscape, Hole convincingly argues that the brilliance of the Maine paintings should be understood as the culmination of a "lifetime of philosophical wrangling and negotiation with the landscape itself."²

Hartley's yearning for a truly authentic and American expression in art found its strongest voice in the Maine paintings. In these works he strove to represent the distinctive subjects of his native region, as we see in *Storm Wave*, while remaining deeply committed to his unique understanding and way of painting the American landscape. Hartley's interest in transcendental spirituality continued to resonate in these works as did his feelings of melancholy and remembrance. In *Storm Wave* the sheer force of the wave itself obliterates into white almost everything in its path, while the jagged vigor of Hartley's brushwork causes the canvas to vibrate with tension. This is not an easy depiction of a lovely day on the coast, rather Hartley used the subject to work out his feelings about the landscape while he simultaneously challenged his viewers to see something new about American art itself.

In Marsden Hartley: Race, Region, and Nation, Donna Cassidy reveals additional layers of interpretation for the Maine scenes. Most notable for this study is the link she draws between Hartley the artist and aesthete and Hartley the savvy art world participant, who re-invented himself as a native-son and regional painter of Maine at a time when tourism to the state was at its height.³ Indeed, the artist traveled to parts of Maine that he had never seen before, and used the inspiration he experienced from these new sights as the catalyst for his expressionist paintings of lighthouses, Mount Katahdin, and of course the coast. However one chooses to interpret these works, their originality is incontestable as is the importance of Hartley's America-as-landscape philosophy that drew on a rich historical tradition of American artistic output.

27, 28

GEORGE LUKS

1867-1933

Nova Scotia Guides, Lake Rossignol, 1919

Oil on canvas

25 x 30 inches (63.5 x 76.2 cm)

Signed lower right: George Luks

Signed and inscribed on verso: Nova Scotia Guides / Lake Rossignol / George Luks

Provenance

Private collection since c. 1970

Poverty Hump, Maine, c. 1922

Oil on canvas

25 x 30 inches (63 x 76 cm)

Signed lower right: George Luks

Signed and inscribed on verso: Poverty Hump / Maine / by George Luks

Provenance

Private collection since c. 1970

George Luks came to his fine art career by way of illustration. He studied briefly as a young man at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, and while he was there met Robert Henri (1865–1929), John Sloan (1871–1951), William Glackens (1870–1938) and Everett Shinn (1876–1953), who, with Luks, would form the core of The Eight. After taking short trips to Europe in the early 1890s, Luks returned to Philadelphia and joined Sloan, Glackens, and Shinn in 1894 at *The Philadelphia Press*, where they all worked as newspaper illustrators. By 1896 Luks had moved to New York City, where he illustrated the popular comic strip "Hogan's Alley" for the New York World. The artist's experience with illustration refined his already dexterous skill as a draftsman and sharpened his observations of contemporary life and interest in recording them.

After taking a longer trip to Paris in 1902–3, Luks returned to New York City and became a gregarious and at times infamous member of Greenwich Village bohemia. At this time he abandoned his career as an illustrator and focused on painting the streets of the city and its more colorful habitués. When the Society of American Artists rejected one of Luks's paintings from its annual exhibition in 1907, Henri staged his now-famous secession and organized his exhibition of The Eight at the Macbeth Galleries.

Luks shared Henri's conviction that modern American art should depict "life in the raw," and that the subject of an artwork, not the artist's virtuoso technique, should take precedence. Luks relished the city's grit and captured it in his canvases with vigor. The critical response to his paintings turned favorable after 1908 and many considered him a modern master. In her exhibition catalogue Painters of a New Century: The Eight, Elizabeth Milroy writes: "[Luks's] facility with the brush and devotion to the portrayal of what were then considered suitably picturesque American character 'types' were welcome alternatives to the deepening mysteries of modern art and abstraction." Thus while his style of painting and choice of subject might have seemed vulgar compared to the work of such artists as William Merritt Chase, Luks's paintings were still touched by the positive national spirit that defined modern American life at the time.

Luks's artistic philosophy lent itself well to his adventuresome and outgoing temperament. In 1915 he turned his attention to portraiture and landscape painting and discovered that he loved spending time in the rugged outdoors. In 1919 he went on a fishing trip to Nova Scotia, perhaps with fellow artist Ernest Lawson, and found that the experience invigorated him both physically and artistically. It became the first of many such travel excursions Luks would take throughout the remainder of his career. In the works he executed during these trips he was inspired as much from nature as from the local people who worked the land and sea. The freshness and immediacy of his

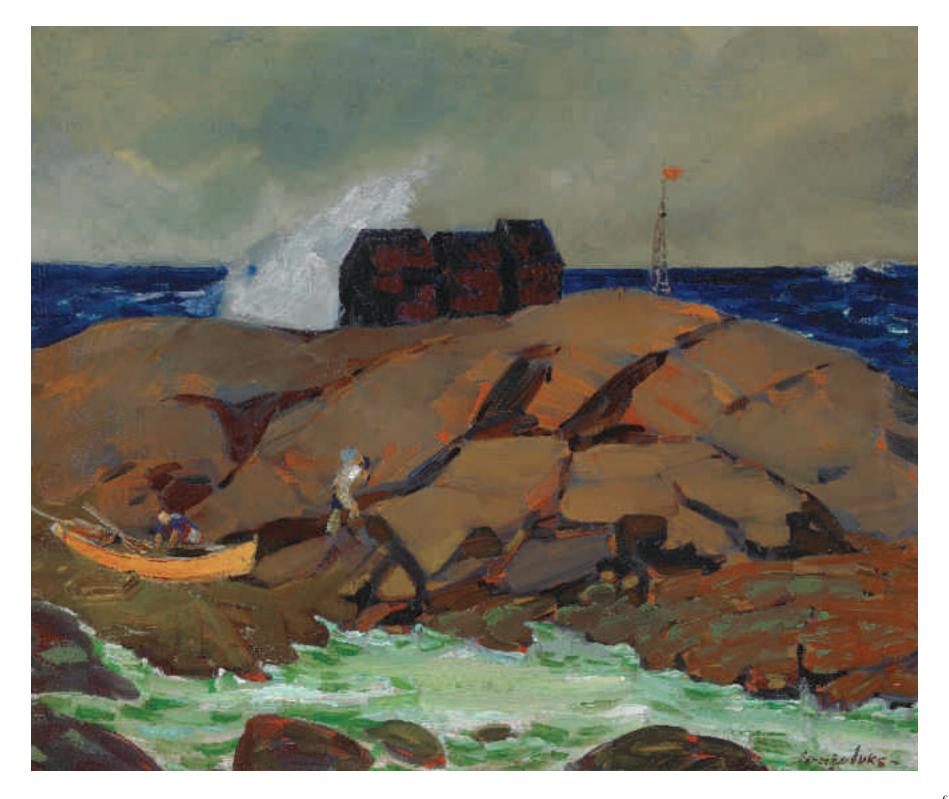


painting style were brought to life by his powerful compositions, rich color palette, and sure handling of paint. He used his keen powers of observation to capture the look, feel, and spirit of a place, all the while maintaining his commitment to modern American art.

The force and vitality of Luks's artistic technique are amply demonstrated in Nova Scotia Guides, Lake Rossignol, from his 1919 trip to Nova Scotia, and Poverty Hump, which was probably executed in the summer of 1922 when Luks visited Maine. Both paintings exemplify the artist's bravura brushwork and bold handling of color. Luks's ability to identify with the lives of his subjects caused him to portray them with dignity and almost monumentality, which in turn elicits a visceral response in his viewer, as if he or she was there to bear witness to the scene. The care Luks takes to inscribe the back of each painting with their exact location seems to indicate that documenting the specificity of place was important to him.

Both paintings and Luks's style in general are quite different from where this exhibition began; however, Luks shared with the artists of the Hudson River School a strong desire to capture the national character of his country. And while he and the modernists like him were interested in vastly different modes of painting and held values quite dissimilar from such artists as Bierstadt or Church, the imperative to see, experience and paint what was unique about their country was remarkably related.





NOTES TO THE CATALOGUE

Cat. I

1. Kevin Sharp, A Wilder Image Bright: Hudson River School Paintings from the Manoogian Collection, exh. cat. (Vero Beach, Fla.: Vero Beach Museum of Art, 2004), p. 77.

Cat. 2

- 1. Sharp, A Wilder Image Bright, cat. 17, p. 87.
- 2. Barbara Novak, "Grand Opera and the Still Small Voice," in Nature and Culture: American Landscape and Painting, 1825–1875 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 24.
- 3. Frederic Fairchild Sherman, Landscape and Figure Painters of America (1917), p. 4.

Cat. 3

I. Eleanor Jones Harvey, The Painted Sketch: American Impressions from Nature, 1830–1880, exh. cat. (Dallas: Dallas Museum of Art, 1998), p. 47.

Cat. 4

- For an in-depth discussion and analysis of Heade's early career and move to New York
 City, see Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., The Life and Work of Martin Johnson Heade: A Critical Analysis and
 Catalogue Raisonné (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 1–23.
- 2. H.T. Tuckerman, quoted in ibid, p. 30.
- 3. Stebbins writes that this period was one of remarkable growth for Heade and that the paintings he executed during this time were as close to the composition and style of the Hudson River School as they would ever be. See ibid, p. 37.

Cat. 6

 William Trost Richards, quoted in Linda Ferber, "In Search of a National Landscape: William Trost Richards in the Adirondacks," in In Search of a National Landscape: William Trost Richards in the Adirondacks, 1850–1870, exh. cat. (Blue Mountain Lake, NY: The Adirondack Museum, 2002), p. 18.

Cat. 7

- Floramae McCarron-Cates, "The Best Possible View: Pictorial Representation of the American West," in Frederic Church, Winslow Homer, and Thomas Moran: Tourism and the American Landscape, exh. cat. (New York: Smithsonian, Cooper Hewitt, National Design Museum, 2006), p. 107.
- 2. Ibid, p. 75.

Cat. 9

- For the most thorough and current discussion of Thomas Chambers, see Kathleen A.
 Foster, Thomas Chambers: American Marine and Landscape Painter, 1808–1869, exh. cat. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2008), passim, and p. I for the quoted citations.
- 2. Ibid, pp. 32-33.
- 3. Ibid.
- 4. Ibid, p. 28.
- 5. Ibid, p. 101.

Cat. 10

- I. Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., The Life and Works of Martin Johnson Heade (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), p. 67.
- 2. Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., The Life and Work of Martin Johnson Heade: A Critical Analysis and Catalogue Raisonné, p. 59.

Cat. II

- I. Joan Carpenter Troccoli et al., Painters and the American West (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 149–50.
- 2. Quoted from the Philadelphia Press, 1885.
- 3. Barbara Novak, "Grand Opera and the Still Small Voice," in Nature and Culture, p. 27.

Cat. 12

1. Thomas Moran, quoted in Anne Morand, *Thomas Moran: The Field Sketches*, 1856–1923 (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), p. 75.

Cat. 14

- 1. William Trost Richards, quoted in Linda Ferber, William Trost Richards: American Landscape & Marine Painter, 1833–1905, exh. cat (Brooklyn: The Brooklyn Museum, 1973), p. 32.
- 2. Ibid.

Cat. 15

- Thomas Moran, quoted in Nancy K. Anderson, Thomas Moran, exh. cat. (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 164.
- 2. Frederick W. Morton, quoted in Anderson, Thomas Moran, p. 165.
- 3. Anderson, Thomas Moran, p. 165.

Cat. 16

- Martha Tedeschi, "A Bold Unguided Effort: The Self Education of America's Master in Watercolor," in Watercolors by Winslow Homer: The Color of Light, exh. cat. (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 2008), p. 34.
- 2. Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., "Winslow Homer: Time in the Adirondacks," in Patricia Junker with Sarah Burns, Winslow Homer: Artist and Angler, exh. cat. (Fort Worth, Texas: Amon Carter Museum; San Francisco: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 2003), 117.
- 3. Homer completed over one hundred watercolors and drawings during this second summer in Gloucester, a level of productivity that remained unsurpassed throughout his career.
- 4. Gail Davidson, "Landscape Icons, Tourism, and Land Development in the Northeast," in Frederic Church, Winslow Homer, and Thomas Moran, p. 72.

Cat. 18

- I. These adjectives were used to describe Prendergast's watercolors of Venice. See Nancy Mowll Mathews, "Prendergast in Italy," in Nancy Mowll Mathews with Elizabeth Kennedy, Prendergast in Italy, exh. cat. (Williamstown, MA: Williams College Museum of Art, 2009), p. 17.
- 2. Ibid.

Cat. 21

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