ABOUT THE ART

Art from Europe and America, 1850-1950

Gallery 14

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About the Art

- Nothing is subtle about this small head of the French author Honoré de Balzac. The profile view shows a protruding brow, nose, and mouth, and the hair falls in heavy masses.

- Auguste Rodin made this sculpture as part of a major commission for a monument to Balzac. He began working on the commission in 1891 and spent seven more years on it. Neither the head nor the body of Rodin’s sculpture conformed to critical or public expectations for a commemorative monument, including a realistic portrait likeness. Consequently, another artist ultimately got the commission.

About the Artist

1840: Born November 12 in Paris
1854: Began training as an artist
1871-76: Worked in Belgium
1876: Traveled to Italy
1880: Worked for the Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory; received the commission for one of his most famous works, monumental bronze doors called The Gates of Hell
1896: His nude sculpture of the French author Victor Hugo created a scandal
1897: Made the Ackland’s Head of Balzac
1898: Exhibited his monument to Balzac and created another scandal
1917: Died November 17 in Meudon
About the Art

- The Spanish Dance retains the uneven surface of the wax model that Edgar Degas sculpted first. The surface absorbs and reflects light, suggesting the movements of the muscles in the dancer’s limbs.

- Degas’ body of work includes over 600 representations of dancing figures – paintings, drawings, and sculpted models. He made wax and mixed media statuettes of dancers as a way of studying their movement, often applying soft wax over a cork frame.

- During his career, Degas exhibited only one sculpture – Little Dancer, Aged Fourteen. It was on view for less than one month and then remained in the artist’s apartment until his death thirty-six years later. Art dealer Ambroise Vollard recalls the artist’s hesitation to show his sculptures or have them cast in bronze: “It’s a tremendous responsibility to leave anything behind in bronze – this medium is for eternity.”

About the Artist

1834: Born July 19 in Paris
1855-56: Attended the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris
1865: Exhibited at the official Salon in Paris
1870: Began taking an interest in dance and opera
1874: Participated in the First Impressionist Exhibition
1881: Showed Little Dancer, Aged Fourteen at the Sixth Impressionist Exhibition
1885: Modeled the Ackland’s Spanish Dance
1917: Died September 26 in Paris
About the Art

- Gustave Courbet was an avid hunter and painted works like this one for patrons who shared his interests. The vantage point is that of a hunter watching animals in the distance; only the female deer has noticed. He described a similar scene in a letter from 1866: “a splendid landscape of profound solitude, done deep in the valleys of my part of the world.”

- This landscape was probably executed quickly, using methods that challenged the conventions of academic painting. Courbet used a palette knife (a spatula-like instrument usually used to mix paint) to apply thick paint directly to the canvas, simulating the rough texture of the landscape.

- Courbet came from a farming family in the Franche–Comté, a region on the Swiss border of France. He spent much of his time in Paris, but continued to portray rural scenes, offering Parisian viewers realistic and unidealized views of life in the provinces.

About the Artist

1819: Born June 10 in Ornans
1839: Moved to Paris
1849: Exhibited for the first time at the Salon in Paris
1855: Independently exhibited work that was rejected from the World’s Fair in Paris
1868: Painted the Ackland’s Roe Deer in the Snow
1871: Named curator of Fine Arts under the Commune
1871: Charged with the destruction of the Vendome column in Paris and jailed
1873: Retried and ordered to pay for the cost of re-erecting the Column; moved to Switzerland to live in exile
1877: Died December 31 at La Tour-de-Peilz, near Vevey, Switzerland
About the Art

- Camille Pissarro painted with a technique commonly used by Impressionist artists. If you look closely at the sky, for example, you can see that he placed brush strokes of unmixed colors side by side rather than blending them together into a unified tone.

- This landscape is related to an 1876 series that Pissarro painted of the Oise River near his home in Pontoise. The Oise was open to traffic and industry, as is evident in the imagery in this painting. Masts of sailing barges and the smokestack of a steam-powered tug echo the tall chimney of the factory in the distance.

- Industrial development along the Oise began in the 1870s. Here, Pissarro balances urban and rural subject matter, showing industry as part of a peaceful summer landscape.

About the Artist

1830: Born July 10 in Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Danish Virgin Islands
1856: Attended private classes at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris
1859: Attended the Académie Suisse, an art school in Paris
1874: Helped organize the first Impressionist Exhibition
1875–86: Exhibited at all eight of the Impressionist exhibitions
1876: Painted the Ackland’s Banks of the Oise
1903: Died November 13 in Paris

Read more in the All About Blue Self-Guide, available at the Visitor Services desk.
Émile Bernard  
French, 1868 – 1941  
**The Wave**, 1892  
oil on pulpwood board, mounted on canvas  
Ackland Fund, 71.29.1  
Conservation treatment for this painting, completed in 1993, was made possible by the William Hayes Ackland Trust.

### About the Art

- Émile Bernard used similar colors to associate the woman’s face with the clouds, her head covering with the sky, and her clothing with the sea. He contrasted this color scheme with the reds, green, and browns of the land between the woman and the sea.

- In a bill of sale dated 1901 Bernard noted this painting’s date and title and a description indicating that he painted it in the coastal village of Raguénez and that it depicts: “the sea, a heap of kelp, some oak trees, the head of a peasant woman in the foreground.”

- Kelp was harvested in some areas for use as fertilizer, fuel, and even fodder for animals.

### About the Artist

1868: Born April 28 in Lille  
1886: Visited Normandy and Brittany; met fellow artists Paul Gauguin and Vincent van Gogh  
1888: Worked in Pont-Aven in Brittany  
1889: Exhibited paintings at the World’s Fair in Paris  
1892: Painted the Ackland’s *The Wave*; organized the first French retrospective of the work of Van Gogh  
1893: Travelled to Italy and then to Egypt, where he lived until 1903  
1904: Returned to France  
1941: Died April 15 in Paris

Think further about this work with Musings, a game available at the Visitor Services desk.
About the Art

• Certain landscape features in Jean Metzinger’s landscape are readily recognizable, like trees, a field, a haystack, a building, and mountains. But they look less like an illusionistic view of receding space and more like a two-dimensional pattern of colors and lines. For example, Metzinger repeated the arc of a tree branch extending across the sky with the curve of the mountain.

• In an interview of about 1908, Metzinger stated, “instead of copying Nature we create a milieu of our own, wherein our sentiment can work itself out through a juxtaposition of colors.”

• In the same year he painted this landscape, Metzinger and the well-known post-Impressionist painter Paul Cézanne exhibited works in the same exhibition. Metzinger’s painting shows some similarities with Cézanne’s style, for example, in patches of color juxtaposed rather than blended, and in dark outlines.

About the Artist

1883: Born June 24 in Nantes, France
1900: Studied at the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Nantes
1903: Sent three pictures to be exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants in Paris; moved to Paris
1904: Painted the Ackland’s Landscape
1906: Elected to a post on the hanging committee of the Salon des Indépendants
1912: Co-wrote a book about Cubism with the painter Albert Gleizes.
1915-16: Served as a stretcher-bearer in World War I
1956: Died November 3 in Paris, France
About the Art

- This work is part of a series of about 100 oil sketches John Marin made between 1910 and 1916, called the Weehawken Sequence. The works focus on imagery of industrial New Jersey, with grain elevators and railroad tracks, the Palisades, and the Hudson River with the New York City skyline beyond.

- Marin painted this series of works outdoors. The strokes and scratched lines give the impression of an artist trying to get down the general impressions of buildings and boat traffic. The fragmented, expressive scene conveys the frenetic pace and congestion of life in a major industrial waterfront.

- John Marin was a member of the avant-garde circle that centered around the influential photographer and gallery owner Alfred Stieglitz.

About the Artist

1870: Born December 23 in Rutherford, New Jersey
1899-1901: Studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
1901-03: Studied at the Art Students League, New York
1909: Began to show work at Alfred Stieglitz’ 291 Gallery in New York
1913: Exhibited ten paintings at the International Exhibition of Modern Art, known as the Armory Show, in New York
1916: Painted the Ackland’s Weehawken Sequence, No. 20
1936: Became one of the first American artists given a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York
1953: Died October 1 in Cape Split, Maine
About the Art

- Jack Butler Yeats began his artistic career as an illustrator for magazines and books. He first painted in watercolors and then transitioned to oil painting several years later. In the 1920s, Yeats began to develop a style characterized by thick, loose brushwork – as seen here – and expressive handling of paint.

- Yeats believed that a painter should be connected to the land he paints. His paintings, like *Canal Bridge*, depicted the places, people, and events that he encountered living in Dublin, while his writing tended to focus on the more rural areas of his childhood, like Sligo.

- One of the most important Irish artists of the twentieth century, Yeats came from a family of prominent artists and writers. His older brother was the poet William Butler Yeats and his father was the portrait painter John Butler Yeats, after whom Jack was named.

About the Artist

1871: Born August 29 in London, England
1879–86: Lived with his grandparents at Sligo, Ireland
1887: Returned to London and attended art classes
1897: First solo exhibition, in London at Clifford Gallery
1910: Moved back to Ireland
1913: Participated in the International Exhibition of Modern Art (the Armory Show) in New York
1917: Moved to Dublin
1930: Published his most famous novel, *Sligo*
1932: Painted the Ackland’s *Canal Bridge*
1939: Appointed a governor of the National Gallery of Ireland
1957: Died March 28 in Dublin
About the Art

- **In Tree Forms** Arthur Dove transforms tree trunks and leaves into swelling, biomorphic curves and jagged lines that vibrate with energy. Through compositional cropping and a close-up angle—two techniques popular in photography of the time—Dove challenged the conventions of traditional landscape painting.

- Inside the serrated boundaries of the leaf-like forms, Dove applied delicate, feathery brush marks that surround bands of green and brown hues. The combination of the colors with their irregular edges creates an effect of reverberation.

- Dove was part of Alfred Stieglitz’s pioneering circle of modern American artists. Between 1912 and 1946, he had annual one-man exhibitions at Stieglitz’s galleries. Tree Forms does not appear in any records for those shows, but an inscription on the back of the painting in Stieglitz’s hand reads: “Tree Forms – 1932/Arthur G. Dove.” This painting is still in the original frame that the artist selected for it.

About the Artist

1880: Born August 2 in Canandaigua, New York
1903: Moved to New York City to work as a freelance illustrator
1907–09: Lived in France
1912: First of 34 annual one-man exhibitions at Alfred Stieglitz’s 291 gallery
1924: Married painter Helen Torr
1932: Painted the Ackland’s Tree Forms
1933: Moved back to his childhood farm in Geneva, New York
1938: Returned to Long Island, settling in an abandoned post office
1946: Died November 23 in Long Island, NY
About the Art

- In July 1943, Hale Woodruff received a fellowship of $2,400 from the Julius Rosenwald Foundation “to pursue individual creativity in art.” He traveled through Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi documenting social and environmental issues in the rural South, such as the landscape with eroded soil seen here.

- In addition to showing soil erosion, Woodruff shows decaying vegetation. He paints some trees with leaves, such as those on the painting’s right side, a bare trunk in the back, and a fallen tree at the bottom of the canvas, blending in with the color of the earth around it.

- Two other works of art by Woodruff depict similar landscapes: one of those is a pastel in the collection of the North Carolina Central University Art Museum in Durham, and the other is a painting in the Mississippi Museum of Art in Jackson.

About the Artist

1900: Born August 26 in Cairo, Illinois
1931: In Paris, worked with Henry Ossawa Tanner
1931-45: Taught at Atlanta University
1936: In Mexico City, studied with Diego Rivera
1943: Received a Julius Rosenwald Foundation fellowship
1944: Painted the Ackland’s Landscape
1945-68: Taught at the Harlem Community Art Center and New York University
1980: Died September 6 in New York City

Chat with this work of art using ARTBOT. Instructions available at the Visitor Services desk.
Louis Stone  
American, 1902 – 1984  
**Untitled**, 1950  
oil on canvas  
Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Lane Stokes, 91.33

**About the Art**

- The vividly colored forms in Louis Stone’s painting are distinguished from one another with contrasting colors, well-defined borders, and in several cases, patterns made out of dots, dashes, or lines.

- In 1950, the year that he painted this work, Stone and his wife took an extended trip to Guanajuato, Mexico, with their friend, the artist Bill Ney. Following their return, Stone began to use vibrant colors in controlled, spatially organized patterns.

**About the Artist**

1902: Born in Findlay, Ohio  
1919-20: Attended the Art Academy of Cincinnati  
1926-27: Studied at the Art Students League in New York City  
1927-33: Lived in Europe, mostly Southern France  
1935: Moved to Lambertville, New Jersey  
1935–38: Worked for the federal program, the Works Progress Administration’s Easel Division  
1939: Exhibited in the United States Pavilion at the New York World’s Fair  
1950: Made the Ackland’s painting  
1984: Died in Lambertville, New Jersey
Rose Piper
American, 1917 – 2005
Slow Down Freight Train, 1946–47
oil on canvas
Ackland Fund, 91.8

About the Art

• The male figure in Rose Piper’s painting combines elements of abstraction and realism. Although his proportions are exaggerated and his skin is several shades of green, Piper took care to make his fingers gripping the train car, his facial features, and the texture of his hair recognizable.

• Slow Down Freight Train is one of a series of fourteen paintings related to African American folk and blues music. Its inspiration is Trixie Smith’s recording of “Freight Train Blues,” a song about the Great Migration (1913–46), when many blacks moved from the rural South to the urban industrial North. In Piper’s painting a man grieves, perhaps for his wife or girlfriend, his community or a way of life left behind.

• In a 1990 letter to former Ackland director Charles Millard, Piper said that her painting is: “a woman’s plea for the train to slow down so that she might go along with her man.”

About the Artist

1917: Born in the Bronx, New York
1940: BA from Hunter College with an art major and geometry minor
1943–46: Studied at the Art Students League, New York
1946–47: Painted the Ackland’s Slow Down, Freight Train; won two consecutive fellowships from the Rosenwald Foundation
1947: First one-woman show, in New York at the Roko Gallery
1948: Won first prize in Atlanta University’s Annual Exhibition for Contemporary Negro Artists
1989: Solo show in New York, at the Phelps Stokes Fund
2005: Died in Connecticut

Listen to music related to this artwork with the Look & Listen Gallery Soundtrack. Visit www.ackland.org/listen to access the playlist.
Albert Gleizes
French, 1881 – 1953
Composition, 1921
oil on panel
Ackland Fund, 69.27.1
Conservation treatment for this painting, completed in 1991, was made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

About the Art

- In Composition, Albert Gleizes portrays a seated figure by layering a series of geometric, interlocking shapes to suggest a face, hair, and arms. This layering, together with the arrangement of verticals, horizontals, and diagonals, conveys an impression of the figure moving in space.

- The wood surface on which Gleizes painted Composition is plywood and over time it warped. Since attempting to flatten the panel would have damaged the painted surface, the Museum instead had a cradle built to support the curved surface.

- Gleizes came from an artistic family. His father Sylvan Gleizes was a successful fabric designer and amateur painter. His maternal uncle, Léon Commerre, was painter who had won the official academy’s Rome Prize in 1875. Another uncle, Robert Gleizes, was an art collector and dealer.

About the Artist

1881: Born 8 December in Paris, France
1902: First exhibited at the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, Paris
1903: First exhibited at the Salon d’Automne in Paris
1911: Exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants in Paris
1912: Co-wrote Du Cubisme with Jean Metzinger
1921: Painted the Ackland’s Composition
1939: Moved to St. Remy-de-Provence
1953: Died 23 June in Avignon, France
Amédée Ozenfant
French, 1886 – 1966
Sisteron, between 1919 and 1928
oil on canvas
The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art Fund, 72.29.1

About the Art

- Between 1918 and 1928, the artist made a number of paintings of Sisteron, a pre-Roman town in France constructed in a narrow gap between two mountain ranges. Scholars have found it difficult to place these paintings in chronological order, hence the exact date of the Ackland’s painting is not known.

- Flat geometric planes, painted using tints and shades of burnt sienna and set against a muted blue sky, emphasize the mass of the architectural forms. Amédée Ozenfant stripped away details, transforming Sisteron into the essence of a town in the south of France rather than portraying the specific place.

About the Artist

1886: Born April 15 in Saint-Quentin, Aisne, in northern France
1905: Travelled to Paris and studied at the Académie de la Palette
1910-13: Lived in Russia, where he married artist Zina de Klingberg
1913: Returned to Paris; worked at the propaganda department during World War I
1919-28: Painted the Ackland’s Sisteron
1920-25: With Le Corbusier, became director and owner of a journal, L’Esprit nouveau
1939: Moved to New York and became the head of the Ozenfant School of Fine Arts
1944: Became an American citizen
1953: Renaturalized as a French citizen
1966: Died May 4 in Cannes, France
Niles Spencer  
American, 1893 – 1952  
Farm Buildings, 1922-26  
oil on canvas  
Burton Emmett Collection, 58.1.244  
Conservation treatment for this painting, completed in 1997, was made possible by a grant from the Pforzheimer Foundation.

About the Art

- To create a rough texture in the grass at the bottom of the picture and in the trees, Niles Spencer glued sand on the canvas. He wanted to reveal the beauty of rural and urban structures – grime, noise, harshness and all – without nostalgia or sentimentality.

- During a trip to Paris, Spencer became interested in Cubism, but after a while he returned to painting New England landscapes. Farm Buildings shows his new style, in which he portrayed recognizable subjects, with flattened, geometric shapes.

- A stamp on the back of the canvas suggests that Spencer bought it while he was in Paris and brought it back to the United States.

About the Artist

1893: Born May 16 in Pawtucket, Rhode Island  
1913-15: Studied at the Rhode Island School of Design  
1915-17: Studied at the Ferrer School in New York City  
1921: Traveled abroad, visiting Paris, the northern coast of France, and England  
1922-26: Painted the Ackland’s Farm Buildings  
1923–30: Painted at the artists’ colony in Provincetown, Massachusetts  
1937: Won a National Mural Competition for the Post Office in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania  
1952: Died May 15 in Dingmans Ferry, Pennsylvania
attributed to the Teague Family
American, North Carolina, Randolph and Moore Counties, 20th century

Grave Marker for James R. Teague, 1938
salt-glazed stoneware
Gift of Charles G. Zug, III, 84.42.1

About the Art

- To make salt glazes, potters throw salt into a kiln that has reached a very high temperature. The heat changes the solid salt into a gas that surrounds the stoneware pots. The sodium from the salt melts the silica (glass) in the clay body to make a pebbly surface and sometimes drips along the sides of a vessel. The surface may be shades of gray, green, or brown.

- The inscription on the top of this grave marker lists the name of the person buried (James R. Teague), his birth and death dates, and his exact age when he died: 54 years, 5 months, and 24 days. It was originally placed in the cemetery of the Union Grove Church in Randolph County, NC.

- Durable, inexpensive stoneware grave markers were once common in certain regions of the Southeast. Over time, however, they were bound to suffer from accidental damage or vandalism, and few survive today. This one was stolen from its original site and eventually turned up with an art dealer. When the donor (a specialist in North Carolina pottery) found it, he immediately offered it to the Union Grove Church, but the church declined to take it back.
About the Art

- A low horizon line, a windmill that punctuates the sky, and boaters that animate the landscape exemplify Dutch compositional devices that were popularized by seventeenth-century artists like Rembrandt van Rijn. Although he spent most of his career in France, Johan Barthold Jongkind’s work often reflects his Netherlandish heritage.

- Jongkind’s use of line imparts a sense of immediacy because of its sketch-like quality. The etching medium, which is more akin to drawing than engraving, allowed him to compose with greater freedom and, as may be the case here, directly from observation.

- Jongkind’s painted landscapes, which focus on light, atmosphere, vivid color, and bold brushwork influenced many Impressionist artists. Claude Monet wrote that he “owed to Jongkind the final education of my eye” and Édouard Manet called Jongkind the “father of modern landscape.”

- The artist signed the plate at the bottom “Rotterdam 1607 Jongkind”

About the Artist

1819: Born June 3 in Lattrop, a village in the Dutch province of Overijssel
1836: Studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in The Hague
1844: Received a grant from Prince Willem of Orange to study in Paris with landscape artist Eugène Isabey
1854: Experienced severe depression and returned to the Netherlands until 1860
1861: Returned to Paris, but went to the Netherlands every summer until 1869
1862: Began producing etchings
1867: Created the Ackland’s print
1891: Died February 9 in La-Côte-Saint-André in southeastern France at the age of 72
About the Art

• Dressed in a white undershirt and overalls, a solitary man employs a rasp, or coarse file, to sculpt the leg molds used in making plastic dolls. His form, and those in the foreground, appear in sharp focus, while the background dissolves into the blurred shapes of factory equipment.

• The subject is an employee of the Paragon Rubber Corporation and American Character Doll Company, which manufactured rubber dolls in Easthampton, Massachusetts. Lewis Hine recorded the conditions at the factory as chief photographer for the federally funded National Research Project. His aim was to investigate changes in industrial technologies during the 1930s and their impact on employment.

• Hine is among the most well-known photographers that used his work to effect social change. With his straightforward and realistic representational style, he provided persuasive and highly visible evidence of emergent issues associated with rapid industrialization and urbanization during the early twentieth century.

About the Artist

1897: Born March 10 in New York, NY
1935: Participated in the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration; served as an instructor in the Art Teaching Division
1939: Exhibited prints at the New York World’s Fair; left the WPA
1950s: Offered etching classes, but discontinued making his own prints
1974: Died in Fort Pierce, FL
About the Art

- With arms raised overhead, a semi-nude woman lies on a plush surface and stares directly at the viewer. Henri Matisse’s abbreviated application of line, at once spontaneous and controlled, distills the pose and movement of his model into its essential elements.

- Despite making lithographs, etchings, and monotypes throughout his career, Matisse engaged in two intense intervals of printmaking activity in 1914 and 1929. During the latter period, he created over 100 etchings, including the Ackland print.

- Matisse produced the 1929 prints in small editions, allowing for fresh and crisp impressions of the composition before the plate wore down. This etching is the eighth impression of twenty-five.

About the Artist

1869: Born December 31 in Le Cateau-Cambrésis at his grandparents’ house
1889: Earned a law degree in Paris and returned home to work as a solicitor’s clerk
1891: Studied at the Académie Julian under Academic painter William-Adolphe Bouguereau
1892: Joined the studio of Gustave Moreau and remained there until 1898
1905: Exhibited at the Salon d’Automne, where he was labeled a Fauve (Wild Beast) due to his use of vibrant non-naturalistic color
1910: Travelled to Spain and Morocco, an experience that informed his later work
1914: Began etching
1929: Created the Ackland’s print
1954: Established a museum for his work in Le Cateau-Cambrésis
1954: Died November 3 in Nice, France at the age of 84
About the Art

- Flat geometric shapes reflect both reality and abstraction in Georg Muche's still-life etching. Two eggs and a long, three-tined fork rest on a circular plate that lies on top of a table. Tilted upward and toward the viewer, the perspective of the table is disorienting, yet legible.

- Muche employs various lines and dots to describe assorted elements in the composition. The grid motif indicates the floor, while the blank space, including some horizontal dashes, represents the wall. Short stroke marks provide dimension to the inner rim of the plate, while the small circles on the tabletop impart texture to the surface.

- Muche was a strong proponent of modernism and, for a brief time, was deeply involved with the Bauhaus, a German school that taught art, design, and architecture from a practical perspective, rather than a strictly academic one. The primary aim of the Bauhaus was to reestablish the connection between craft, manufacturing, and fine art to combat the depersonalized effects of industrialism.

About the Artist

1895: Born May 8 in Querfurt, Germany
1913: Studied painting at the Azbe-Kunstschule in Munich
1914: Moved to Berlin and worked at the Sturm-Galerie
1917: Served in the infantry during World War I
1920: Began working at the Bauhaus at Weimar
1923: Created the Ackland’s print
1931: Became Professor at the Staatliche Akademie für Kunst und Kunstgewerbe in Breslau
1933: Founded a master class for textile art at the Krefeld Textile Engineering School, which he taught until 1959
1987: Died March 26 in Lindau
Hans Hofmann
American, born in Germany, 1880 – 1966
Undulating Expanse, 1955
oil on canvas
Ackland Fund, 88.27
Conservation treatment for this painting, completed in 1991, was made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

About the Art

- Undulating Expanse was created as part of a commission for a mural that was never executed. The horizontal format of this painting, which was not Hofmann's usual choice, may be related to the requests outlined in the commission.

- Much of the canvas is left exposed, making apparent the variety of ways in which paint was applied. Some areas are thick and were painted directly from tubes of paint. Other sections show the marks of a palette knife. Still others are thinly washed in color, allowing a pencil sketch to show through.

- In 1933, he opened the Hans Hofmann School of Fine Arts in New York. In 1935, he opened a summer school in Provincetown, MA. He taught many artists who later became established figures, including Lee Krasner, Helen Frankenthaler and Larry Rivers.

About the Artist

1880: Born March 21 in Weissenberg, Bavaria
1898: Enrolled in a Munich art school
1904-14: Lived in Paris
1910: Held first one-man exhibition at Paul Cassirer’s gallery in Berlin
1915: Opened school for modern art in Schwabing, Munich
1930: Invited to teach at the University of California, Berkeley
1932: Settled in New York and taught at the Art Students League
1933: Opened his own school in New York
1935: Opened a summer school in Provincetown, Massachusetts, site of a well-known artists’ colony
1941: Became a U.S. citizen
1955: Painted the Ackland’s Undulating Expanse
1966: Died February 17 in New York
About the Art

- The artist was born in Washington, North Carolina and moved to New York with his family at age 13.

- Mostly known for more stylized, sleeker portrait heads produced later in his career, the artist here has given the surface of the sensitively rendered head an expressive, obviously hand-worked treatment.

- The edge of a modeling tool has been used to incise the eyebrows and the hairline.

- The noted art historian and critic David Driskell wrote that Artis “has not attempted to solve problems with his art but has seen beyond those obstacles often binding the human spirit. He has encountered through his art the meaning of a universal world” (1971).

- The base of this sculpture was probably made by the artist himself.

About the Artist

1914: Born Washington, NC
1927: Moved to New York City
1930s: Studied privately with Augusta Savage and at the Art Students League with Robert Laurent, both major sculptors in the Harlem Renaissance
1935: Made the Ackland’s Head of a Boy
1947: Awarded a Rosenwald fellowship to study with Ivan Mestrovic at Syracuse University
1954–1965: Taught at Nebraska state Teachers College
1966–1975: Taught at Mankato State College, MN
1971: Retrospective exhibition at Fisk University in Nashville