

ABOUT THE ART

Art from
Europe and
America,
1850-1950

Gallery 17

ACKLAND

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ACKLAND ART MUSEUM

The University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill
101 S. Columbia Street
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
Phone: 919-966-5736

MUSEUM HOURS

Wed - Sat 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sun 1 - 5 p.m.
Closed Mondays & Tuesdays.
Closed July 4th, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve,
Christmas Day, & New Year's Day.



Eugène Fromentin
French, 1820 – 1876
Five Standing Arabs, 1874
oil on panel
Ackland Fund, 76.38.1
Conservation for this painting,
completed in 2000, was made
possible by the William Hayes
Ackland Trust.

About the Art

- In this painting Eugène Fromentin focuses on the men's clothing, poses, and bearing, only roughly sketching in the background. He appears to be studying both profile and three-quarters views of the men.
- In 1874 Fromentin exhibited paintings with North African subjects, so this study may be related to his work on one of them.
- Both a painter and a writer, Fromentin was particularly interested in depicting the landscape and people of North Africa, parts of which had been conquered by France in the 1830s.

About the Artist

1820: Born October 24 in La Rochelle, France

1845: Published art criticism on the official Salon exhibition

1846: Visited Algeria in secret

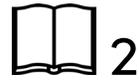
1847: Exhibited for the first time in the official Salon

1847–53: Made two more trips to Algeria

1857–59: Published two travel books on North Africa

1874: Painted *Five Standing Arabs*; exhibited two paintings of Algerian themes at the official Salon

1876: Died August 27 in Saint-Maurice, France



Anna de l'Épinais
French, 19th century
Atala and Chactas, 1828
oil on canvas
Ackland Fund, 67.10.1

About the Art

- The artist sets two lovers in a verdant setting framed with palm trees and filled with blossoms that echo the blue in the woman's sash and the orange in the man's tunic, feathers, and earring.
- This painting illustrates a scene from the novel *Atala*, published by the French writer François-René de Chateaubriand in 1801. Set in the Louisiana wilderness, the novel tells the story of a young, mixed-race Christian woman who takes a vow of celibacy and then falls in love with Chactas, a young Natchez man who is taken prisoner by her father's tribe.
- Very little is known about the painter Anna de l'Épinais, who signed and dated this painting at the lower edge of the canvas. It seems clear that she was familiar with Chateaubriand's text, but it is uncertain what other sources she may have consulted in composing the painting.



Léon Bonnat

French, 1833 – 1922

Head of a Model, c. 1857

oil on paper, mounted on canvas

Ackland Fund, 77.47.1

Conservation treatment for this painting, completed in 2008, was made possible by the generous support of the Ackland Art Museum Guild.

About the Art

- With the brilliant red tones of the shirt, Léon Bonnat models the man's left shoulder so it appears to project from the dark background toward the viewer; the colors of the man's hair blend in with the background, seeming to recede away from us. Together these effects create the illusion that the man's head is leaning slightly away from us.
- This is probably a study that Bonnat could incorporate into a larger painting in which he wanted to include a figure of a Black man seen from behind looking to the left, perhaps in one of the Orientalist scenes he produced. This study has not been definitively connected with another painting by Bonnat.
- As a teacher, Bonnat encouraged strong contrast of light and shadow and heavy modeling. Bonnat's best-known students included Thomas Eakins, Gustave Caillebotte, Raoul Dufy, and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec.

About the Artist

1833: Born June 20 in Bayonne, France

1846-53: Lived in Madrid, Spain

1854: Moved to Paris, France

1857: Painted the Ackland's study; Won second prize at the Salon in Paris for his painting *The Resurrection of Lazarus*

1865: Opened his own studio

1900: Received the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor

1905: Became Director of the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris

1922: Died September 8 in Monchy-Saint-Eloi, France



Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-Le-Duc, French, 1814 – 1879
(designer)

Placide-Benoît-Marie Poussielgue-Rusand, French, 1824 –
1889 (manufacturer)

Ciborium, 1852

vermeil, with gilded bronze foot and semi-precious stones
(including jasper, chrysoprase, moonstone, agate, opal,
garnet, citrine, amethyst, and turquoise)

The Elisabeth Holmes Lee Fund, 2017.33ab

About the Art

- A ciborium is a vessel used to hold the bread for celebrating the Eucharist in Christian churches. The beautiful form and materials of this object indicate its importance in religious practice. The twelve semiprecious stones on its stem symbolize the twelve apostles of Jesus.
- Creating this ciborium was a collaboration between its manufacturer and Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, an architect who wanted to design church furnishings in keeping with his architectural ideals. Viollet-le-Duc designed the ciborium in 1852. This example shows slight variations from the original design and was probably manufactured in the 1880s.

About the Artist

1814: Born January 27 in Paris, France

1838: Began working in the French government office overseeing restoration of major monuments

1852: Became connected with Emperor Napoleon III's court; designed the Ackland's *Ciborium*

1863–72: Published works on architecture

1879: Died September 17 in Lausanne, Switzerland



Honesdale Decorating Company (American, 1901-1932)
Vase, c. 1901-1910
Cameo glass, acid cut
Gift of Dorothy and S. K. Heninger, Jr. and the William A. Whitaker Foundation Art Fund, 93.14.4

About the Art

- Graceful, interlaced arabesque lines move upward from the base of this glass vase to form flame-like botanical shapes in tones of amber and green, culminating at the scalloped gold rim at the top. Gilded outlines and carefully placed dots provide structure to the design, which is set against a frosted ground.
- In 1901, the well-known glass manufacturing company C. Dorflinger & Sons, established the Honesdale Decorating Company in the Pennsylvania town of that name. This art glass factory provided etched, engraved, and gilded designs in various patterns for Dorflinger, which included vases and tableware, among other products.
- The organic foliate forms, sinuous lines, and “whiplash” curves of this design are characteristic of Art Nouveau, a late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century decorative style that originated in Europe in the late 1880s and reached the peak of its popularity around 1900.
- The founder of C. Dorflinger & Sons, Christian Dorflinger, was born in Alsace, France, in 1828 and was apprenticed to a glassmaker in eastern France before immigrating to the United States in 1846. He established several glasshouses in New York and Pennsylvania, which employed hundreds of people. Among his famous clients were US presidents Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885), Benjamin Harrison (1833-1901), and Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924).



Emma Sandys

British, 1843 – 1877

Mary Emma Jones, 1874

oil on board

Gift of Lauren M. Sanford in honor of Professor Mary D. Sheriff, 2018.41

About the Art

- Seated in a shallow and narrow space that cuts off her hands, Jones wears a pale and elegant renaissance-style dress with puff-and-slash sleeves set against a flourishing laurel branch. Just as the space she occupies seems constrained, so too is her luxuriant red hair tightly bound – in a style reminiscent of classical antiquity – in three headbands. Yet the turn of her head, her sparkling eyes and parted lips suggest the inner movement of her mind.
- Mary Emma Jones was the artist's sister-in-law. She was also the model for many paintings by Emma Sandys' older brother, the artist Frederick Sandys. Very little is known about Emma Sandys in comparison to her more famous brother.
- The artist's monogram at upper left is stylized and almost Asian-looking.
- The painting has been recently donated to the Ackland in honor of one of the University's most distinguished professors. Mary Sheriff (1950–2016) was a pioneering and inspiring scholar of European art by and about women (and also had red hair).

About the Artist

1843: Born in Norwich, England

1863: Made her earliest known, dated painting

1867–74: Exhibited paintings in London, England, and Norwich

1874: Painted *Mary Emma Jones*

1877: Died in November in Norwich



William Bell Scott
British, 1811 – 1890
**Incoming Tide on the
Northumberland Coast**, 1861
oil on canvas

About the Art

- William Bell Scott combined vivid secondary colors – purple, green, and orange – with carefully delineated pebbles, seaweed, and rivulets of water on the beach.
- Northumberland is a region on the east coast of Great Britain. Since Scott was interested in accuracy, we can deduce that *Incoming Tide* shows the sunrise as the morning tide comes in.
- Since this landscape was painted in 1861, it is likely that it relates to Scott's studies for his murals for Wallington House in Northumberland in England. The murals showed the history of the region, beginning with the building of the Roman wall and ending with men at work in a railway engine factory.

About the Artist

1811: Born September 12 in Edinburgh, Scotland

1834: Exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy

1838: Published first volume of poetry

1853–4: Published *Poems of a Painter*

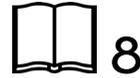
1856–61: Painted murals at Wallington House, Northumberland, England

1861: Painted the Ackland's landscape

1865–68: Painted murals at Penkill Castle, Strathclyde, Scotland

1870: Wrote a book about the German printmaker Albrecht Dürer

1890: Died November 22 in Penkill Castle



John Francis Murphy
American, 1853 – 1921
Landscape, 1881
oil on canvas
Gift of Katherine P. Arrington,
by her niece Sylbert
Pendleton, 70.13.4

About the Art

- During his career, Murphy worked to capture the local character of rural communities that were quickly disappearing. The fields here show the beginning stages of cultivation, suggesting that the wilderness is being made habitable.
- A review from the year Murphy made this painting noted his:

increased fondness for vapor, shadow and mystery qualities which in a picture stimulate the imagination and make the canvas perpetually attractive when presented in moderation.
- This humble scene separates Murphy from the grandiose painters of the Hudson River School – it is a receding view of low-lying country. There is a clump of willow trees to the left, behind a woman in a red shirt. Tall reeds fringe the pond in the foreground, contrasting hues of pink with bright overlapping tints of green.

About the Artist

1853: Born December 11 in Oswego, New York

1868: Moved with his family to Chicago, Illinois

1873: Was made an Associate at the Chicago Academy of Design

1875: Moved to New York, New York

1881: Painted the Ackland's *Landscape*

1882: First major exhibition of his work at Doll and Richards, a gallery in Boston, Massachusetts

1885: Won the Hallgarten Prize at the National Academy of Design in New York for best painting done by an American under 35

1902: Awarded Carnegie Prize by Society of American Artists

1921: Died January 21 in New York



Eastman Johnson
American, 1824 – 1906
**Study for The Cranberry
Harvest, Island of
Nantucket**, c. 1875–80
oil on board
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Norman
Hirschl, 72.51.1

About the Art

- Although gathering cranberries was a commercial enterprise by the late nineteenth century, the manner of picking them – on hands and knees or doubled over combing out the berries with one’s fingers – had not been mechanized. The standing figures Eastman Johnson places among those that are bent over accentuate the difference between the two postures and suggest the difficulty of the work.
- There are at least thirteen other related studies and paintings by Johnson of cranberry picking. The final work, *The Cranberry Harvest, Island of Nantucket* is at the Timken Museum of art in San Diego, California.
- By the 1880s, critics began to identify Johnson as a genre painter of a rural American way of life that was quickly disappearing due to industrialization and urbanization. In his letters, Johnson contrasted the timeless agrarian ritual of cranberry picking to the industrial center that he left behind in New York.

About the Artist

1824: Born July 29 in Lovell, Maine

1849: Moved to Düsseldorf, Germany to study art

1859: Elected as an associate of the National Academy of Design in New York, New York

1870: Helped found the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; began to summer on Nantucket Island, Massachusetts

c. 1875–80: Painted the Ackland’s study for the *Cranberry Harvest*

1906: Died April 5 in New York

[Chat with this work of art using ARTBOT. Instructions available in the Museum lobby.](#)



Jasper Francis Cropsey
American, 1823 – 1900
**Landscape with Mountains
at Sunset**, c. 1850
oil on paper
Ackland Fund, 85.19.1

About the Art

- Although this painting is small, Jasper Cropsey constructed a scene of deep space, including the cliff at the front of the painting, the water, the far shore, a mountain range, and finally the sunset sky. To underscore the vast scale of his landscape, he places tiny human figures on the cliff and in the boat.
- The round format suggests a type of landscape painting that artists made using an optical device called a Claude glass (named after the seventeenth-century French landscapist Claude Lorrain). Artists turned away from the view they wanted to depict and instead represented its reflection as it appeared in the tinted convex mirror of the Claude glass. The reflection was thought to transform an ordinary scene into one that adhered to conventions of a picturesque landscape.
- There are different suggestions about why Cropsey made this painting. One is that it was part of an album presented to the famous Swedish opera singer Jenny Lind during her American tour. Another is that it was part of a set of the four seasons, depicting autumn on the Hudson River. Cropsey painted at least six sets of the seasons, two of which are circular.

About the Artist

1823: Born February 18 in Rossville, Staten Island, New York

1843: Had an independent practice in New York as an architect and a landscape painter

c. 1850: Painted the Ackland's landscape

1851: Became a full member at the National Academy of Design in New York

1856–63: Lived in England

1867: Began to build a Hudson River villa in Warwick, New York

1900: Died June 22 at his home in Hastings-on-Hudson, New York

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Charles François Daubigny

French, 1817 – 1878

Pond at Corbigny (L'Etang de Corbigny),

c. 1858

oil on canvas

Bequest of Charles and Isabel Eaton,
2009.31.36

About the Art

- The three water birds (two on the shore at right and one in the sky) have evidently been still long enough to allow the pond's surface to become still, reflecting the clouds above.
- Charles Daubigny often painted landscape scenes with ponds or rivers, such as this view in the town of Corbigny in central France. Critics at the time admired many features of his landscapes – but found his brushwork too loose for their tastes.
- His practice of working en plein air (or outdoors) had a significant impact not only on Daubigny's own art but also on the art of younger generations of landscape painters, notably the Impressionists. Throughout his career he painted water scenes from a studio on a boat. That may account for the vantage point we see in this landscape, with water extending all the way across the lower margin, as though we are seeing it from a boat.
- When this painting was cleaned recently, it transformed a somewhat gloomy, overcast scene into one bathed in dappled sunlight. A photograph taken before cleaning is reproduced here.



About the Artist

1817: Born February 15 in Paris, France

1835: Traveled to Italy

1836: Returned to Paris and worked in the painting restoration department at the Louvre

1838: First exhibited at the official Salon in Paris

1843: Began painting landscapes in the Forest of Fontainebleau, France

c. 1858: Painted the Ackland's landscape

1870: Went to London, England, during the Franco-Prussian War

1878: Died February 19 in Paris