Hale Aspacio Woodruff
American, 1900 – 1980
Landscape (Mississippi, Soil Erosion), c. 1944
oil on canvas
Ackland Fund, 2013.6

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, North Carolina, 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, France, worked with American artist Henry Ossawa Tanner
1931–45: Taught at Atlanta University in Georgia
1936: In Mexico City, Mexico, studied with Diego Rivera
1943: Received a Julius Rosenwald Foundation fellowship
c. 1944: Painted the Ackland’s Landscape
1945–68: Taught at the Harlem Community Art Center, directed by sculptor Augusts Savage, and at New York University in New York, New York
1980: Died September 6 in New York

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