

# ABOUT THE ART

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Art from  
Europe and  
America,  
1850-1950

Gallery 14

ACKLAND

## **QUESTIONS?**

Contact us at [acklandlearn@unc.edu](mailto:acklandlearn@unc.edu)

## **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.  
Sunday 1 – 5p.m.  
Closed Mondays & Tuesdays.  
Closed July 4th, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve,  
Christmas Day, & New Year’s Day.

## About About the Art

The Ackland's *About the Art* guides offer information about every work of art from the Museum's collection that is on view in galleries 2, 3, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17. All of these galleries are marked on the Gallery Map available at the desk in the Lobby. In the bottom right corner of the label beside each object, there is an open book symbol with a number. You can find the same symbol and number on the top of the corresponding page in *About the Art*.

Within each entry, you can find the following information:

- At the top of the page, you'll see a thumbnail image, the title of the object, who made it and with what materials, and where and when it was made
- Next, you'll see bullet points with information or observations about the object (more or fewer, depending on how much we know about the object so far). There is no standard formula for what kinds of information appears, but you will often find comments on historical context, style, and materials.
- In keeping with the Ackland's tagline, "Look Close, Think Far," the first bullet point will often highlight something visible in the work of art itself.
- You will find names, phrases, and concepts that could be good internet search terms for those who want to learn more
- When specialized terms are used, you'll see a definition, helpful contextual information, or language suitable for an internet search.
- Whenever we know the artist's name, there will be some details about the artist's life, often under the heading "About the Artist," but sometimes as one of the bullet points.

For those visitors who want to engage further with an object, we also suggest other resources to investigate on our website: [ackland.org/education/learning-resources](http://ackland.org/education/learning-resources).

The authors of *About the Art* include Ackland curators and educators who use a variety of sources. They consult museum records, art historical research, comments from outside specialists, and more.

## About Gallery 14: Art from Europe and America, 1850-1950

This gallery and Gallery 17 feature art from Europe and America made during the one hundred years between the mid-nineteenth century and the mid-twentieth. Here the works are organized chronologically, so that the earlier works are at one end and the later works at the other, allowing visitors to track an increasing tendency toward abstract styles. In two display cases along the gallery's main axis, changing installations of prints, drawings, and photographs from the Ackland's collection complement the visual and thematic qualities of the paintings and sculpture.



Auguste Rodin  
French, 1840 – 1917  
**Head of Balzac**, 1897  
bronze  
Ackland Fund, 63.27.1

## 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, France

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*

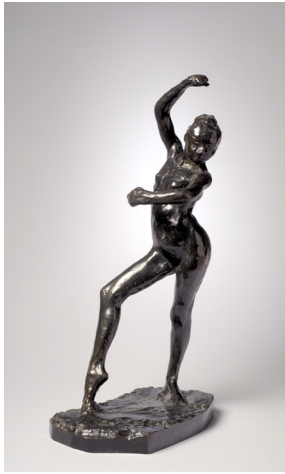
1882: Met sculptor Camille Claudel, who became Rodin's pupil, lover, and trusted studio assistant. Claudel is believed to have created whole and partial figures for *The Gates of Hell*

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, France



Edgar Degas  
French, 1834 – 1917  
**Spanish Dance**, c. 1885, cast 1921  
bronze  
Ackland Fund, 74.21.1

## About the Art

- The *Spanish Dance* retains the uneven surface of the wax model that Edgar Degas sculpted first, before the figure was cast in bronze. 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, France

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

c. 1885: Modeled the Ackland's *Spanish Dance*

1917: Died September 26 in Paris



Gustave Courbet

French, 1819 – 1877

**Roe Deer in the Snow, 1868**

oil on canvas

Ackland Fund, 62.1.1

Conservation treatment for this painting, completed in 2008, was made possible by the generous support of Carol McNeel.

## 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. Courbet 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, France

1839: Moved to Paris, France

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 revolutionary government, the Paris Commune

1871: Charged with the destruction of the Vendôme 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



Camille Pissarro  
French, 1830 – 1903  
**The Banks of the Oise, Near  
Pontoise, 1876**  
oil on canvas  
Ackland Fund, 65.28.1

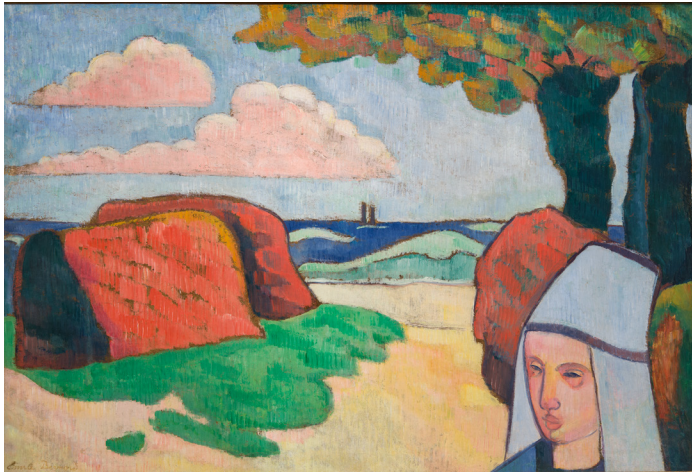
## About the Art

- 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, France. 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, France  
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





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.
- She is wearing a traditional French Celtic headdress called a *coiffe*, the style of which would have been specific to her village.
- 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, in Brittany, on the rugged western coast of France. 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. The prominent placement of the kelp in the painting almost makes it seem like the subject.

## About the Artist

1868: Born April 28 in Lille, France

1886: Visited Normandy and Brittany, France; 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, France

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





Jean Metzinger  
French, 1883 – 1956  
**Landscape**, 1904  
oil on canvas  
Ackland Fund, 60.26.1

## About the Art

- Certain landscape features in this painting by Jean Metzinger 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 from 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 the use of 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, France; 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



Robert Henri  
American, 1865 – 1929  
**Sylvester**, 1914  
oil on canvas  
32 x 26 in. (81.2 x 66.0 cm)  
Terra Foundation for American  
Art, Daniel J. Terra Art Acquisition  
Endowment Fund, 2017.2, L2023.2.4

## About the Art

- The ten-year-old boy depicted in this portrait is newsboy Sylvester Cunningham Smith, and this portrait is one of twenty-five extant paintings that Henri made in California during summer 1914. While Henri produced few portraits of African Americans during his career, he painted Sylvester three times that year.
- Sylvester sits before a brightly colored, abstract background. This is a departure from Henri's dark backgrounds that he employed in earlier works.
- Henri had much experience in painting portraits of children; he wrote in his treatise *The Art Spirit* (1923) that "If you paint children you must have no patronizing attitude towards them."

## About the Artist

1865: Born Henry Robert Cozad on June 24 in Cincinnati, Ohio

1882: Changed his name to Robert Earl Henri after his father was involved in a fatal shooting and relocated the family from Nebraska to Colorado

1886: Enrolled at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia

1908: Helped organize the influential exhibition *The Eight* in New York

1914: Painted *Sylvester*

1915: Began teaching at the Art Students League of New York, where he remained until 1927

1929: Died July 12, in New York, New York



Arthur Garfield Dove  
American, 1880 – 1946  
**Tree Forms**, 1932  
oil on canvas  
Ackland Fund, 65.25.1

## 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 in New York City. *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, New York to work as a freelance illustrator

1907–09: Lived in France

1912: Participated in first of 34 annual one-man exhibitions at Alfred Stieglitz's 291 gallery in New York

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, New York, settling in an abandoned post office

1946: Died November 23 in Huntington, New York



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 Augustus Savage, and at New York University in New York, New York

1980: Died September 6 in New York

Chat with this work of art using ARTBOT. Instructions available in the Museum lobby.



Archibald John Motley Jr.

American, 1891 – 1981

**Mending Socks**, 1924

oil on canvas

43 7/8 x 40 in. (111.4 x 101.6 cm)

Burton Emmett Collection, 58.1.2801

## About the Art

- *Mending Socks* portrays the artist's grandmother, Emily Motley, who lived with the artist's family in Chicago.
- The oval portrait at the upper left was a gift to Mrs. Motley from the woman who owned her when she was enslaved, given upon her emancipation.
- In a 1978 oral history interview, Archibald Motley said about *Mending Socks*, "I think it's one of the best things I've done as far as portraiture is concerned."

## About the Artist

1891: Born October 7 in New Orleans, Louisiana

1894: His family moved to Chicago, where he spent the majority of his life

1918: Graduated from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago

1924: Painted *Mending Socks*

1927: *Mending Socks* was voted the most popular painting at the Newark Museum in New Jersey

1929: Awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship

1980: Received an honorary doctorate of fine arts from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago

1981: Died January 16 in Chicago, Illinois





Archibald John Motley Jr.

American, 1891 – 1981

**Between Acts**, 1935

oil on canvas

39 ½ x 32 in. (100.3 x 81.3 cm)

Terra Foundation for American Art, Daniel J. Terra

Art Acquisition Endowment Fund, 2009.1, L2023.2.3

## About the Art

- The people in this backstage dressing room made their livelihoods performing in front of audiences. Archibald Motley, however, composed the scene so that none of them actually engage with the painting's viewers. In fact, the only one in the painting who does is the subject of the portrait on the wall.
- Beyond the door stands a Black man Motley has depicted in a caricatured manner, holding a cigar between thick red lips. His top hat, cane, white gloves, and too-short pants mark him as a minstrel performer.
- Motley includes a mirror directly opposite the space where the painting's viewers stand, but the mirror reflects only the woman posed before it. The absence of any other reflection in the mirror excludes viewers from the backstage setting and casts them as voyeurs, unseen by the performers.

## About the Artist

1891: Born October 7 in New Orleans, Louisiana

1894: His family moved to Chicago, where he spent the majority of his life

1918: Graduated from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago

1933: Assigned to work for the easel division of the Public Works of Art Project

1935: Painted *Between Acts*

1929: Awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship

1980: Received an honorary doctorate of fine arts from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago

1981: Died January 16 in Chicago, Illinois



Lyonel Feininger  
German, active in Germany and  
America, 1871 – 1956  
**Denstedt**, 1917  
oil on canvas  
34 3/8 x 46 5/8 in. (87.3 x 118.4 cm)  
Terra Foundation for American Art,  
Daniel J. Terra Collection, 1988.27,  
L2023.2.1

### About the Art

- Denstedt is a suburb of the German city Weimar, which Feininger began visiting in 1913.
- Feininger uses the principles of cubism to flatten and fragment Denstedt's architectural features like staircases, fortifying walls, and Gothic towers.
- The acid-like yellows, oranges, and greens of the painting cast the features of this medieval town with an unnatural sense of menace and likely reflect the wartime tensions that its citizenry was experiencing as a result of World War I.

### About the Artist

1871: Born July 17 in New York, New York

1888: Moved to Berlin to study with Ernst Hancke

1894: Began his career as a cartoonist

1909: Joined the artist group known as the Berliner Sezession

1917: Painted *Denstedt*

1919: Became the first faculty appointment at Bauhaus

1937: Returned to America after the Nazi Party declared his work "degenerate"

1956: Died January 13 in New York, New York





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 more realistic.
- *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 Black people moved from the rural South to the urban industrial North in search of economic opportunity and escape from the Jim Crow South. In Piper's painting a man grieves, perhaps for his loved ones, 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." The scene, then, is depicted from the woman's vantage point (whether that woman is the painter or an imagined viewer) as she watches the man climb aboard the train.

## 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, New York

1946–47: Painted the Ackland's *Slow Down, Freight Train*; won two consecutive fellowships from the Rosenwald Foundation

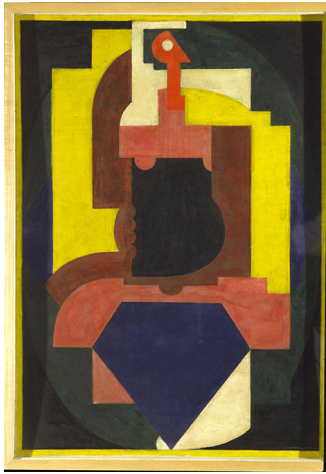
1947: First one-woman show, in New York at the Roko Gallery

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](http://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 French artists' academy's Rome Prize in 1875. Another uncle, Robert Gleizes, was an art collector and dealer.

## About the Artist

1881: Born December 8 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, France

1953: Died June 23 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

- Amédée Ozenfant stripped away details, transforming Sisteron into the essence of a town in the south of France rather than portraying the specific place. 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.
- Between 1918 and 1928, the artist made a number of paintings of Sisteron, town with pre-Roman origins, 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.

## About the Artist

1886: Born April 15 in Saint-Quentin, Aisne, in northern France

1905: Travelled to Paris, France, 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, 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 to the canvas.
- 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. He wanted to reveal the beauty of rural and urban structures — grime, noise, harshness and all — without nostalgia or sentimentality.
- 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, where he painted *Farm Buildings*.

## 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, New York

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



## 18

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

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### 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, North Carolina.
- 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.



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Eugene Grasset  
French, 1841 – 1917

**November**, from *The Months*, 1895  
color wood engraving  
Provenance Unknown, L87.55.1178

## About the Art

- Beneath a bare tree that has shed its autumn leaves, a woman gathers large, orange blossoms from her garden. She wears a green dress adorned with darker green arrows, a reference to the zodiac sign Sagittarius and the month of November.
- This print belongs to a set of twelve plates, originally published as a calendar for the French magazine *La Belle Jardinière*, or *The Beautiful Gardener*, in 1896. Areas left blank on the lower left and bottom edge for the days and dates indicate this impression is a proof, a print made before the calendar's official production.
- Grasset was championed for his graphic work and made designs for posters, book and magazine covers, illustrations, watercolors, drawings, jewelry, fabrics, metalwork, furniture, and designs for stained glass.
- This calendar page demonstrates the Art Nouveau style, a popular artistic movement from 1890 to about 1910, which combined the use of flowing lines and curves with nature-inspired motifs. Here, Grasset also incorporated elements of Japanese woodblock printmaking, for instance his use of a flat, vivid, yet limited, color palette as well as bold outlines and carefully integrated decorative elements.

## About the Artist

1841: Born on May 25 in Lausanne, Switzerland

1861: Traveled to Zurich, Switzerland to study architecture

1871: Moved to Paris, France to design furniture, tapestries, and decorative arts

1877: Began producing graphic design works

1890–93: Began teaching at the École Guérin, moving to other institutions throughout his career

1894: Mounted his first, and only, one-person exhibition at the Salon de Cent

1895: Created the Ackland's print

1901: Co-organized the Société des Artistes-Décorateurs

1909: Founded, along with other artists, the Société d'Art Decoratif Français

1917: Died on October 23 in Paris





George Richmond  
British, 1809 – 1896

**A Copse Seen Across a Meadow,**  
1830s–40s  
pen and ink and brown wash  
Gift of Ian Kennedy, 2023.27

## About the Art

- Visible beyond the branches that frame this drawing, a thicket of trees sits at the edge of a flat meadow. George Richmond's fresh and spontaneous use of pen and ink with diluted and saturated wash is varied throughout, with some areas sparsely indicated while others, like the leaves on the branches, are represented with a heavy application of the drawing media.
- Richmond's dappled treatment of wash, particularly to define the foliage, is reminiscent of landscape sketches made by French artist Claude Lorrain (1660–1682, active in Italy). During the early nineteenth century, Claude's idyllic and classical landscapes were popular among artists and collectors in Britain. In 1824, the British Museum acquired a large number of Claude's drawings from a bequest, making it possible for Richmond to have studied the drawings there.
- Though Richmond was a prolific draftsman throughout his career and depicted many landscapes, Richmond's primary source of income was portraiture.

## About the Artist

1809: Born on March 28 in London, England

1824: Entered the Royal Academy of Arts in London

1828: Visited Paris, France to study and draw objects in the Louvre Museum

1830s–40s: Created the Ackland's drawing

1837–39: Traveled to Italy

1849–41: Returned to Italy

1850: Averaged four sitters for portraits per day

1871: Offered the position of director of the National Gallery, London, but declined it

1896: Died on March 19 in London





George Schrimpf  
German, 1889 – 1938

**Mother**, c. 1918

woodcut

Burton Emmett Collection, 58.1.1389

## About the Art

- The monumental black shape of a woman rises before a wall of abstract buildings. Her arched figure and the slender shadow of her body protect the child behind her legs. She watches closely as her child looks apprehensively toward the cityscape beyond.
- This print was featured in *Der Sturm*, one of Germany's most important art periodicals of the period. Meaning storm or tempest, *Der Sturm* elevated and promoted new artistic styles that broke with tradition, including Expressionism, Cubism, and Futurism.
- A largely self-taught artist, Schrimpf is associated with two modern artistic movements in Germany. His early work is characterized by the bold, abstracted form of Expressionism seen in this woodcut print. After World War I, his style aligned more closely with the *Neue Sachlichkeit*, or New Objectivity, which focused more on reality and the objective world.

## About the Artist

1889: Born on February 13 in Munich, Germany

1902: Apprenticed as a baker in Passau in southern Germany

1905-14: Traveled through Europe

1915-18: Lived in Berlin, Germany

c. 1918: Created the Ackland's print

1922: Traveled to Italy

1926: Taught at the Staatliche Kunstschule in Munich

1933: Became a professor at the Staatliche Westenriede-Gewerbeschule in Berlin

1937: Included in the Degenerate Art exhibition in Munich, organized by the Nazi party

1938: Died on April 19 in Berlin



## 22

Robert Doisneau  
 French, 1912 – 1994  
**The Indignant Lady**, from the  
 portfolio *Robert Doisneau*, 1948  
 printed 1979  
 gelatin silver print  
 Gift of William A. Hall, III, 81.63.1.1

### About the Art

- With eyes wide and lips pursed in astonishment, a woman looks through a store window at a painting of a partially nude woman depicted from behind and leaning over a table. To the left of the shocked viewer, another woman passes by and glances toward the storefront.
- Doisneau's talent as an artist was creating compositions of a dynamic and moving world by means of expertly chosen framing devices and vantage points. Many of the artist's photographs record fleeting moments of Parisian suburban life, though he was not opposed to staging an image if he missed a particularly interesting observed event.
- A friend of Doisneau's named Robert Miquel, nicknamed Romi, owned an antique shop in Paris and installed the risqué painting (seen in this photograph) in its front window. Doisneau later recalled the circumstances saying:

I saw that a lot of people glanced at the painting in the window, and their reactions were quite amusing. I thought it would make a good photo-series...I arranged with Romi to sit in the shop, holding the Rolleiflex [camera] on my knee, to see if I could get some good pictures. Because there was a reflection in the window, passers-by couldn't see what I was doing.

### About the Artist

1912: Born on April 14 in Gentilly, Val-de-Marne, France, a suburb of Paris, France  
 1926–29: Attended the École Estienne in Paris to study engraving  
 1931: Employed as an assistant to photographer André Vigneau (French, 1892–1968)  
 1945: Joined the Alliance Photo agency after serving in World War II  
 1948: Took the image of the Ackland's photograph  
 1948–52: Worked for the fashion magazine *Vogue*  
 1960: Traveled to the United States  
 1983: Awarded the Grand Prix National de la Photographie by the French Minister of Culture  
 1994: Died on April 1 in Paris



## 25

William E. Artis,  
American, 1914 - 1977  
**Head of a Boy**, c. 1935  
low-fired clay  
Charles and Isabel Eaton Trust  
2019.32

### About the Art

- 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 William 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 February 2 in Washington, North Carolina

1927: Moved to New York, New York

1930s: Studied privately with Augusta Savage and at the Art Students League with Robert Laurent, both major sculptors in the Harlem Renaissance

c. 1935: Made the Ackland's *Head of a Boy*

1947: Awarded a Rosenwald fellowship to study with Ivan Mestrovic at Syracuse University in New York

1954-1965: Taught at Nebraska state Teachers College

1966-1975: Taught at Mankato State College, Minnesota

1971: Retrospective exhibition at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee

1977: Died April 3 in Northport, New York