A Sight to Behold

The Corcoran Legacy Collection of
Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century
American Landscape Painting at the
American University Museum

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Wooded Landscape (detail)
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Curated by Carolyn Kinder Carr
American University Museum Collection

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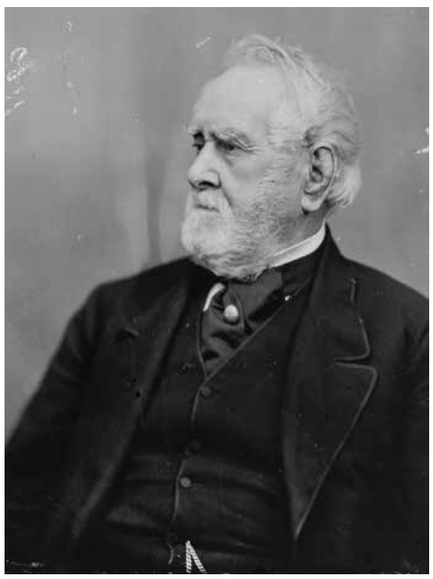
The Corcoran Legacy Collection of Nineteenth and Early Twentieth- Century American Landscape Painting: An Introduction

By Carolyn Kinder Carr, PhD
Exhibition Curator



Mathew Brady (1822–1896)
Mr. William Wilson Corcoran (detail)
Collodion print, 1883
Library of Congress, Brady-Handy
Photograph Collection LC-BH821-1100

Previous page: **Frederick Rondel** (1826–1892)
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When the Corcoran Gallery of Art, founded by William Wilson Corcoran (1798–1888) in 1869, opened to the public in 1874, eighteen American landscapes were among the paintings given pride of place in the second-floor galleries of the new museum designed by James Renwick (1818–1895). The initial display included the work of artists who have become seminal figures in the history of American art, among them Thomas Cole (1801–1848), Frederick Edwin Church (1826–1900), John F. Kensett (1816–1872) and George Inness (1825–1894), as well as paintings by their then well-respected peers, Thomas Doughty (1793–1856), Régis François Gignoux (1814–1882), and Walter M. Oddie (1808–1865). Paintings by Oscar Bessau (active 1855–1860), William B. Boggs (1809–1875), and the museum's curator, William MacLeod (1811–1892), acknowledged the vitality of art created by those working in the District of Columbia. All were gifts from Corcoran's personal collection.[1]

During his lifetime, Corcoran's enthusiasm for landscapes guided the museum's board in its choice of new works for the collection. With an almost uncanny sense of important art, the Gallery purchased paintings by Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902), Asher B. Durand (1796–1886), and Thomas W. Whittredge (1820–1910), and additional works by Cole, Church, and Kensett. After Corcoran's death, landscapes remained an important element of the Gallery's collection. In the last decade of the nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth century landscapes by contemporary artists continued to be added to the collection. Throughout the twentieth century significant historical works were acquired by gift and purchase, but by the late 1930s, the use of gallery funds to acquire landscape paintings by contemporary artists waned, seemingly a victim of greater interest in figurative art and, later, in abstraction.[2]

With the close of the Corcoran Gallery of Art in 2014, most, although not all, of its vast collection was distributed to museums in the District of Columbia. The American landscapes went mainly to the National Gallery of Art and the American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center. The Smithsonian American Art Museum received several that augmented its landscape holdings, the Phillips Collection acquired *Gray Thaw*, 1920, by John F. Folinsbee (1892–1972), and the National Museum of Women in the Arts was given *Hudson River Landscape*, 1862, by Abigail Tyler Oakes (1823–c. 1898), one of two nineteenth-century landscape paintings by a woman in the Corcoran Gallery of Art collection.[3]

In its entirety, the American landscape collection included important and lesser-known artists. Paintings by the foremost figures in the accepted historical canon are now an integral part of the American collection at the National Gallery of Art. The Corcoran Legacy Collection at the American University Museum, while missing works by many major masters of the genre, possesses paintings that speak to the important trends that shaped the character and style of landscape painting in America from its beginnings through the mid–1930s. These works are the focus of this catalog and the accompanying exhibition.

Landscape details occasionally graced the background of eighteenth-century portraits and more elaborate representations of nature were often employed to represent the location of an historic event, but not until the 1820s did landscape become important subject matter in American art. During the following decades, it would rival portraiture and supplant still-life and history painting as the topic that most engaged a great number of contemporary artists.

Art historians usually date the beginning of American artistic interest in landscape as a subject worthy of painting to the arrival in New York City of English artist Thomas Cole in 1825. That summer Cole began sketching the rich, verdant landscape along the Hudson River and in the Catskill Mountains. When he returned to the city, his paintings caught the attention of artists John Trumbull (1756–1843), William Dunlap (1766–1839), and Asher B. Durand, all influential figures in the burgeoning East Coast art world. Their enthusiasm for Cole's paintings encouraged collectors and assured Cole's stature among fellow artists.[4]

While Cole provided a model for many of his peers and for several generations of American painters, he was not alone in his interest in landscape. In the 1820s Thomas Doughty, a mostly self–taught Philadelphia native, charmed by English landscape paintings he initially knew from prints, became the first American-born artist to champion landscape painting.[5] As MacLeod noted in the catalog of the Gallery's opening exhibition, "Doughty divided honors with Cole as the leading landscape painters of America."[6]

Artists who painted along the Hudson River, in the foothills of the Catskills, and amidst the tree-lined precipices of the Adirondacks became known as Hudson River School artists. They shared an interest in the careful representation of natural objects as well as in the presentation of vast, precisely articulated vistas. Paintings inspired by a site were usually begun with drawings and oil sketches, while the more elaborate compositions that emerged from these preliminary studies were frequently enhanced in the studio. Most artists affiliated with the group lived in the New York area, but those who lived in New England or the Midwest, or had recently emigrated from Europe, were not immune to the seductive charms of the Hudson River School's approach to nature. Artists like Albert Bierstadt, eager to capture the myth and majesty of the far West or the exotic terrain of South America, took with them pictorial traits learned in the East.

The popularity of Hudson River School paintings was reinforced by Transcendentalism, the philosophical, religious, and literary movement that developed in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. It gave eloquent voice to the belief, pervasive at the time, of the symbiotic relationship of God, man, and nature. Dense forests, lush plant life, and panoramic views became visual metaphors connoting life and death and manifestations of the sublime.[7] As Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) wrote, "Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact."[8] Hudson River School paintings also came to function as political statements. Artists and viewers alike saw these landscapes as symbols of America's strength, its prosperity, and its potential for future growth. Indigenous plant species and natural monuments, like Niagara Falls, denoted America's unique qualities and were markers for the ways in which this nation was separate and distinct from its European roots.[9]

The visibility of Hudson River School paintings and the artists who made them was encouraged as well by the National Academy of Design, an artist-run organization

founded in 1824 to promote the fine arts through classes and exhibitions. The Academy regularly selected painters identified with the Hudson River School to show in its annual exhibitions. Participation in Academy exhibitions connoted an artist's professional status and membership in the organization became the ultimate accolade.[10]

By the 1870s, the influence of the Hudson River School had declined significantly.[11] In its place, two French approaches to landscape painting began to shape the look of American landscape painting: the Barbizon School and Impressionism.

The Barbizon School took its name from the small village of Barbizon near the Forest of Fontainebleau where artists often painted. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (1796–1875), Charles-François Daubigny (1817–1878), Jules Dupré (1811–1889), Théodore Rousseau (1812–1867), and Constant Troyon (1810–1865) are some most identified with the School. In general, these artists sought to create images based on reality that, compared to the crisp execution of idealized subject matter typical of French Academic art, featured looser brushwork, less linear rendering of forms, and greater tonal modulation of color.

Many American artists, like William Morris Hunt (1824–1879) and George Inness, who spent time in France had direct contact with these artists or their work. For them topographical details and noble sentiments so important to Hudson River School artists now became less important than the use of landscape to connote personal feelings. To convey a sense of mood, frequently one of quiet contemplation, they used a limited palette composed of tonally compatible colors applied to images with soft rather than precisely defined contours. Subsequently, the American artists who ascribed to these principles became known as "Tonalists" and their style as "Tonalism."[12]

Among the artists in the Corcoran Legacy Collection at the American University Museum who became identified with the Tonalist movement in America are Ralph Albert Blakelock (1847–1919), Carl Christian Brenner (1838–1888), Homer Dodge Martin (1836–1897), John Francis Murphy (1853–1921), George Henry Smillie (1840–1921) and his brother James (1833–1909), John Robinson Tait (1834–1908), and Alexander Wyant (1836–1892). In the post-Civil War era, which saw the rise of urbanization and industrialization, these artists used nature less as a symbol of America's promise than a source of comfort, an arena for peace and reflection.

William Morris Hunt (1824–1879)
Rapids, Sister Islands
Oil on wood panel, 11 ¼ x 17 ⅛ in., 1878
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Gift of Mabel Stevens Smithers, the Francis Sydney Smithers Memorial, 1938)

Carl Christian Brenner (1838–1888)
Afternoon in Early June, A Kentucky Beech Grove
Oil on canvas, 26 x 46 in., 1880
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1881)

James David Smillie (1833–1909)
The Cliffs of Normandy
Oil on canvas, 41 ½ x 66 ½ in., 1885
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1907)

George Hitchcock (1850–1913)
Dutch Landscape
Oil on canvas, 17 ¼ x 21 ½ inches, c. 1889–1892
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Edward C. and Mary Walker Collection, 1937)

Not all artists who travelled to France took up the mantle of Barbizon-inspired painting. Robert Vonnoh (1858–1933), who arrived in France in 1880, received a classical education at the Académie Julian, but like many others of his generation he was smitten by the work of the Impressionists. His paintings rarely exhibit the brilliant color associated with the Impressionists, yet he shared with them the conviction "that natural objects should be painted or described as they first strike the eye in their immediate and momentary effect."[13] The small patch of brilliantly colored flowers surrounded by gray mist in *Dutch Landscape* leaves no doubt that expatriate George Hitchcock (1850–1930), like Vonnoh, was captivated by Impressionism, particularly Claude Monet's (1840–1926) delight in atmospheric effects.

The commitment to contemporary art that was a hallmark of the Corcoran Gallery of Art in the nineteenth century was reinforced in the twentieth century when the museum established in 1907 the First Annual Exhibition of Oil Paintings by Contemporary American Artists. Better known as the Corcoran Biennial, these exhibitions gave the museum the opportunity to invite artists of national prominence to exhibit. In the first two-plus decades of the Biennial's existence, landscapes continued to be of considerable interest to both the exhibition and acquisition committees. Often a landscape painter won one of the coveted prizes, and the museum usually purchased either a prize-winning work from the exhibition or another landscape in the show that had won critical praise. With the exception of Louis M. Eilshemius (1864–1941), all the artists in *A Sight to Behold* who made paintings after the year 1900 participated in the Biennials, many repeatedly.[14]

Maurice Brazil Prendergast (1858–1924)
St. Malo
Oil on board, 10 5/8 x 13 3/4 in., c. 1909–1910
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mrs. Charles Prendergast in memory of
Charles and Maurice Prendergast, 1991)

Theodore Wores (1859–1939)
White and Pink Blossoms
Oil on canvas, 16 1/8 x 20 1/8 in., 1921
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Dr. A. Jess Shenson and Dr. Ben Shenson, 1978)

Art has always struggled between familiar, more traditional forms and newer modes of presentation. This tension was evident in the Biennial exhibitions and remains true of the works in this exhibition. The canvases of Edward H. Barnard (1855–1909), Julian W. Rix (1850–1903), Arthur F. Tait (1819–1905), and John Elwood Bundy (1853–1933), all frequently praised for their poetic nature, maintain a Barbizon-like approach in their representation of the natural world. Their presentations are separated from their nineteenth-century predecessors, mostly by a consistently sunnier mood, signified by a brighter palette. The latter was undoubtedly a nod on their part to the color in the paintings of the Impressionists, although these American artists appear to have had no interest in emulating other stylistic and philosophical elements associated with the French movement. Impressionism, however, never disappeared from the American artistic vocabulary. It was clearly the stylistic impetus behind Theodore Wores's (1859–1939) *White and Pink Blossoms*. Even today, it remains, in various modified forms, a popular approach to painting, especially among amateurs.

Modernism in American painting took a variety of forms.[15] For Maurice Prendergast (1858–1924) it manifested in his construction of images. During his four-year stay in France (1891–1895), Prendergast came to know the work of a group of Post-Impressionist artists, among them Pierre Bonnard (1867–1947) and Jean Édouard Vuillard (1868–1940), known as Les Nabis. Their goal, in brilliantly colored, highly decorative paintings, was to make works that were not a transcription of nature but a personal interpretation of the external world. Prendergast happily adopted this mantra. His paintings of everyday life created from dabs of paint eliminate any reference to traditional modeling.

From top:
Louis Michel Eilshemius (1864–1941)
New Mexico
Oil on Masonite, 13 ½ x 19 in., 1900
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of The Honorable Francis Biddle, 1960)

Ben [Benjamin] Foster (1852–1926)
Sunset in the Litchfield Hills
Oil on canvas, 30 x 36 in., c. 1910
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1911)

Louis M. Eilshemius (1864–1941) took this emphasis on new ways to interpret nature in yet another direction. His New Mexican landscape of 1900 suggests that he could create works based on reality, but he is far better known for his small, idiosyncratic paintings that suggest imaginary stage sets. For him, nature was merely a symbol of place with no reference to an existing site.

Several painters in the Corcoran Legacy Collection update their imagery by reshaping space, either by diminishing or forgoing traditional perspective. In the paintings of Albert L. Groll (1866–1952) and Chauncey F. Ryder (1868–1949), the horizon is placed so that the earth and sky appear on a similar picture plane. The vertical ascent of the muddy terrain in Ben Foster's (1852–1926) *Sunset in the Litchfield Hills* and the imposing Mount Monadnock in Charles H. Woodbury's (1864–1940) painting are devices each artist employed to keep the viewer's eye from wandering into deep space, as was customary in nineteenth-century landscapes. Boldly presented imagery and richly painted surfaces are the pictorial tools that Woodbury, George G. Symons (1861–1930) and Edward W. Redfield (1869–1965) use to distinguish their landscapes from paintings of an earlier era. Their pleasure in the sheer physicality of paint and its tactile energy is their homage to emerging Modernism.

George Hawley Hallowell's (1871–1926) *Wissataquoik River Drive* was acquired in 1923 from the Corcoran's Ninth Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Painting. After more than a quarter-century of collecting landscapes that either omitted the presence of man or limited his place in the painted environment to a subservient one, the purchase of this work speaks to the growing taste on the part of the Corcoran Gallery of Art collection decision-makers for imagery that, like Hallowell's, gives equal billing to man and nature. The preference for paintings by living artists that possess this equilibrium was evident as early as 1907 with the acquisition of Winslow Homer's (1836–1910) *A Light on the Sea*, 1897. It continued throughout the 1930s and into the early 1940s with the purchase in 1937 of William J. Glackens's (1870–1938) *Luxembourg Gardens*, 1906, and in 1941, Edward Hopper's (1882–1967) *Ground Swell*, 1939, to cite examples of this trend with works now in the Corcoran Legacy Collection at the National Gallery of Art.

With the exception of Edward Redfield's *Road to Lumberville*, 1930–1935, a gift from James Parmelee in 1941, no landscape paintings from the 1930s, 1940s or 1950s entered the American University Museum's Corcoran Legacy Collection, nor did any made in the last half-century. The most recent paintings in the Museum's collection are Clive Gray's *Landscape*, 1964; Robert Di Niro's *Buffalo Landscape*, 1968; James Rosenberg's *Landscape*, 1968; and Charles Dunn's *Williamsburg*, 1970. To explore more fully American landscape traditions during and after the mid–1930s, one must turn to the works on paper—photographs, prints, and drawings—that came to the Museum as gifts from the trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art.

George Hawley Hallowell (1871–1926)
Wissataquoik River Drive
Oil on canvas, 25 ¼ x 30 ¼ in., c. 1920
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase, William A. Clark Fund, 1923)

Edward Willis Redfield (1869–1965)
Road to Lumberville
Oil on canvas, 21 ½ x 19 ½ in., 1930/1935
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Bequest of James Parmelee, 1941)

ENDNOTES

[1] William MacLeod, *Catalogue of the Paintings, Statuary, Casts, Bronzes, &c. of the Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC: Gibson Brothers, 1874).

[2] Sarah Cash, "'Encouraging American Genius': Collecting American at the Corcoran Gallery of Art," in *Corcoran Gallery of Art: American Paintings to 1945*, Sarah Cash, ed., in collaboration with Emily Dana Shapiro and Lisa Strong (Manchester, VT: Hudson Hills Press in association with the Corcoran Gallery of Art, 2011), pp. 15-43. The check list and entries accompanying Cash's essay provide a detailed view of the extensive American collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. It is the basis of many of my assumptions about the history of collecting landscapes at the museum. Biographical information on individual American artists who painted these landscapes can be found in *A Catalogue of the Collection of American Paintings in the Corcoran Gallery of Art: Painters Born Before 1850*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1966) and *A Catalogue of the Collection of American Paintings in the Corcoran Gallery of Art: Painters Born from 1850 to 1910*, vol. 2, ed. Dorothy W. Phillips (Washington, DC: Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1973).

[3] "Objects Distributed from the Corcoran Gallery of Art," www.nga.gov.

[4] Monographs, exhibition catalogs, and articles on American landscape painting are numerous. Useful overviews are provided in Barbara Novak, *American Painting of the Nineteenth Century: Realism, Idealism and the American Experience* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969), 63 ff; Barbara Novak, *Nature and Culture: American Landscape and Painting*, 1825-1875 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); John K. Howat, *The Hudson River and its Painters* (New York: Viking Press, 1972), 27–51; Kevin T. Avery, "A Historiography of the Hudson River School," in *American Paradise: The World of the Hudson River School*, intro. John K. Howat (New York: Harry N. Abrams for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1987.)

[5] Howat, *Hudson River*, 32.

[6] MacLeod, *Catalogue*, 36, no. 21.

[7] Novak, *Nature and Culture*, 3-17.

[8] Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature," in *Complete Essays and Other Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Brooks Atkinson, intro. Mary Oliver (New York: Modern Library, 2000), 12.

[9] Novak, *Nature and Culture*, 15-17.

[10] Annette Blaugrund, *The National Academy of Design: A Brief History* (New York: National Academy of Design, 1980); nationalacademy.emuseum.com.

[11] Howat, *Hudson River*, 48-51; Maggie M. Cao, *The End of Landscape in Nineteenth-Century America* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018).

[12] Peter Bermingham, *American Art in the Barbizon Mood* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press for the National Collection of Fine Arts, 1975); David Adam Cleveland, *A History of American Tonalism: 1880–1920*, Forward by John Wilmerding (Manchester, VT: Hudson Hills Press, 2010).

[13] May Brawley Hill, *Grez Days: Robert Vonnoh in France* (New York: Berry-Hill Galleries, 1987), 38.

[14] Peter H. Falk, ed., *The Biennial Exhibition Record of the Corcoran Gallery of Art*, 1907-1967 (Madison, CT: Sound View Press, 1991).

[15] Milton W. Brown, *American Painting from the Armory Show to the Depression* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955).

A Sight to Behold

Thomas Doughty (1793–1856)
Long Island Landscape
Oil on academy board, 7 ¼ x 14 ¾ inches, c. 1849
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of William Wilson Corcoran, 1869)

Thomas Doughty was the first American-born artist to devote himself exclusively to landscape painting. An early proponent of sketching outdoors, he is often considered, along with English émigré Thomas Cole, one of the founders of American landscape painting. As William MacLeod, curator of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, noted in the catalog of the Gallery's opening exhibition, "Doughty divided honors with Cole as the leading landscape painters of America."

A Philadelphia native, Doughty gave up his job as a leather currier in 1820—"contrary to the wishes of friends and family"—to become an artist. Although mostly self-trained, he met with success rather early. In 1824 he was elected a member of the Pennsylvania Academy of Art, and in 1827 he became a member of the newly-established National Academy of Design. Doughty's work was initially influenced by European landscape painting, which he knew from prints and paintings he saw in regional collections. Later he was inspired by paintings he saw during visits to Europe in 1837–39 and again in 1845–46. The horizontal format and languorous mood of *Long Island Landscape* suggests his admiration of the work of English artist John Constable.

Not all critics approved of the manner in which Doughty constructed his images. In about 1840, one critic wrote that he has "glaring faults. He does not give character to his trees, and has not variety enough. His water is seldom transparent. All his pictures purport to be from nature; but we think his is particular in taking the outline from the spot and then finishing from recollection." While singled out for the manner in which he embellished his compositions, Doughty was not alone among his peers in this approach to completing a canvas.

William Wilson Cororan greatly admired Doughty's work. He gave this painting, as well as *Autumn on the Hudson* (1850, National Gallery of Art) as a founding gift to the Corcoran Gallery of Art in 1869.

Walter Mason Oddie (1808–1865)
Lake near Lenox, Massachusetts
Oil on canvas, 36 x 49 in., 1850
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Gift of William Wilson Corcoran, 1869)

Walter Oddie initially sought to support his family, which ultimately included six children, as a stockbroker. But about 1830, despite the advice of family and friends, he gave up his less-than-successful career and sought his fortune as an artist. He quickly became an accepted member of the New York art community. In 1837, five years after he first exhibited at the National Academy of Design, he was invited to become an associate member of the Academy.

In 1839 a critic for the *New York Literary Gazette* admired Oddie's painting on view at the Academy, "It is painted in a good quiet manner, has great breadth, and a depth of atmosphere that is not gained by the trick of mist, but only by artist-like methods—accurate linear perspective and fine gradations of light and dark." When *Lake Near Lenox, Massachusetts* was exhibited at Williams and Stevens, a gallery on Broadway, the critic for the *New York Evening Post* noted, "It represents a beautiful sheet of water, and the surrounding mountains, lying between Lenox and Stockbridge, and well-known to visitors of that picturesque region."

William Wilson Corcoran included this landscape among the many give he gave to the new museum bearing his name.

Régis François Gignoux (1814–1882)
Landscape
Oil on canvas, 34 ½ x 30 ½ inches, 1849
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Gift of William Wilson Corcoran, 1869)

A native of Lyon, France, Régis François Gignoux immigrated to the United States in 1840 and settled in the New York area where he remained until he returned to Paris in 1869. In 1844 he acquired a studio at 51 West Tenth Street, a building that also housed the studios of noted Hudson River School artists Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902), Frederic Church (1826–1900), Jasper Francis Cropsey (1823–1900), and John Frederick Kensett (1816–1862). Open and amiable, Gignoux made friends with these men and other prominent individuals affiliated with the National Academy of Design. He began exhibiting at the Academy in 1842, and in 1851, after seven years as an associate, was elected to full membership in this important institution. In the early 1860s he was elected president of the Brooklyn Art Association, a position that also signified his stature among fellow artists.

As a young man Gignoux studied at the École des Beaux-Arts under Hippolyte-Paul Delaroche (1797–1856), an artist known for his highly finished surfaces and his melodramatic interpretation of historical subjects. Gignoux's *Landscape*, with its dramatic waterfall and intense contrast between the bright blue sky and dark foliage, reflects his tutor's training, but its style and subject matter easily found approval among his American peers.

William Wilson Corcoran gave this painting, part of his personal collection, to the newly established Corcoran Gallery of Art in 1869.

Régis François Gignoux (1814–1882)
Winter Scene
Oil on canvas, 36 x 50 ¼ in., 1850
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of William Wilson Corcoran, 1869)

While painting directly from nature was the guiding mantra of the majority of Gignoux's fellow American artists who exhibited landscapes at the National Academy of Design and were affiliated with the Hudson River School, the idyllic vista of *Winter Scene* suggests that the seventeenth-century Dutch landscape painting provided as great a visual impulse as a countryside site in Gignoux's adopted home.

William Brenton Boggs (1809–1875)
On Catskill Creek
Oil on canvas, 26 ¼ x 36 ¼ in., 1850
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of William Wilson Corcoran, 1869)

William B. Boggs, born in New Brunswick, New Jersey, to a distinguished family—his father, a lawyer, was clerk of the U.S. District Court and a trustee of Rutgers College—came to Washington in 1842 as a civilian clerk in the Navy Department. Before he moved to the nation's capital, Boggs lived in New York where he collected art and exhibited his own work at the National Academy of Design (1839–1844). His naval career may have limited further participation in Academy exhibitions, but his artistic skill remained in demand. From 1852–1856, he was assigned to the USS Vincennes to serve as the recording artist for the North Pacific Exploring and Surveying Expedition. When he returned to his home base, he exhibited three paintings from this extensive journey in the first annual exhibition, in 1857, of the Washington Art Association, an organization heartily supported by W. W. Corcoran.

It is not known where Boggs studied painting or with whom he might have taken lessons. If he was self-taught, *On Catskill Creek* reveals his keen eye for the compositional formulas frequently used by Hudson River School painters. *On Catskill Creek* was one of several paintings from his personal collection that W. W. Corcoran donated to the museum bearing his name.

Oscar Bessau (d. 1860)
Little Falls of the Potomac
Oil on canvas, 16 ¼ x 24 ⅛ in., 1856
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of William Wilson Corcoran, 1869)

It is not known when or where Oscar Bessau was born, only that he came to America by way of Canada, "in his minority," and had trained in France with Eugène Isaby (1803–1886). In the early 1850s Bessau was one of the topographical artists accompanying John Russell Bartlett (1805–1888), who was in charge of surveying the Mexican-American border following the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe-Hildago, which ended the Mexican-American war. It may have been his drawings for this survey that led Charles Lanman, a Georgetown resident, to hire Bessau to illustrate his two-volume book, *Adventures in the Wilds of the United States and British American Provinces*, published in 1856. That year Bessau also established an art school at his residence on the east side of Sixteenth Street, just north of H Street. As part of the city's art community, he exhibited *Little Falls of the Potomac* in 1857 at the first annual exhibition of the Washington Art Association. William Wilson Corcoran was listed in the catalog as its owner. In 1860 Bessau joined the United States Boundary Expedition tasked with documenting the eastern border of California. He was in Los Angeles when he died on December 2, 1860.

Frederick Rondel (1826–1892)
Wooded Landscape
Oil on canvas, 14 x 20 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Rudolph Max Kauffmann, 1954)

Frederick Rondel, who was born in Paris and studied art there, was in his late twenties when he arrived in America in 1855. Initially he worked as a lithographer in the Boston area before moving to New York in 1859. Talented, with a keen eye for important details, he quickly integrated the elements found in paintings by established Hudson River School artists—a pond, a waterfall, fallen logs, tall robust trees, multiple mountain ranges, and wispy clouds—into his picturesque compositions. His ability to create accomplished images of the natural world led the National Academy of Design exhibition committee to display his work regularly beginning in 1857. In 1861 a critic admired the eleven paintings he had on view at the Academy for "their purity of color, conscientiousness of treatment and truthful feeling."

1861 was also the year Rondel became a full member of the Academy. Like numerous members, he taught at the Academy. Winslow Homer (1836–1910) was his most famous pupil.

William Louis Sonntag (1822–1900)
Classic Italian Landscape with Temple of Venus
Oil on canvas, 36 x 60 x 1 ½ in., c. 1860
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Charles A. Munn and Victor G. Fischer in
memory of Orson D. Munn, 1912)

As a young child William Louis Sonntag moved with his parents from the Pittsburgh area of Pennsylvania to Cincinnati, Ohio, and in this bustling river city he established his reputation as an artist. In 1853, eager to expand his knowledge of art and places, he made his first trip to Europe, accompanied by his studio mate, Robert S. Duncanson (1821/22–1872), and his student, John Robinson Tait (1834–1909). Inspired by all that he saw, in 1856 he spent several months in Italy. Upon his return to America, he found a welcoming market for his paintings on the East Coast, which led him to establish a studio in New York. He quickly became a respected member of local art circles. He first exhibited at the National Academy of Design in 1855. In 1860 he was elected an associate of this institution, and the following year he became a full member.

Sonntag had long admired the work of Thomas Cole (1801–1848) and in the early 1850s he made a copy of Cole's *Voyage of Life* (1842, National Gallery of Art). He shared the older artist's interest in idealized, imaginary landscapes, layered with content. In this nostalgic fantasy, the Temple of Venus symbolizes a loving and measured society presiding over a lush but tranquil natural world. Along with several other similar works painted after Sonntag's return from Italy but before the Civil War, *Classic Italian Landscape with Temple of Venus* is often interpreted as a plea for peace and civil calm in an era fraught with political turbulence.

Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze (1816–1868)
On the Banks of a Stream
Oil on canvas, 18 ¼ x 24 ¼ in., c. 1860
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Museum Purchase Anna E. Clark Fund, 1963)

Emanuel Leutze emigrated from Germany to America with his family in 1825. He grew up in Philadelphia, where as a talented teenager, he sought training from English artist John Ruben Smith (1775–1849), who practiced his craft in both New York and Philadelphia. In 1841, Leutze, eager to enhance his artistic skills, left for Dusseldorf, Germany, to study at its renowned art academy.

Although Leutze lived abroad in the 1840s and much of the 1850s, he regularly exhibited at the National Academy of Design beginning in 1843. In 1844 he was elected an associate of the Academy and, following his return to America, full membership in 1860.

In 1858 Leutze settled permanently in America and established studios in both New York and Washington. *On the Banks of a Stream* must have been painted when Leutze was in the nation's capital seeking the federal commission, which he received in 1861, to paint *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way* for the House of Representatives. The 20 x 30-foot mural symbolized the pervasive belief among Americans in Manifest Destiny.

On the Banks of a Stream owes as much to contemporary European landscape painting as it does to American sources. This pastoral scene, which evokes a languid moment along a river typical of those in northern Virginia, provides ample evidence that Leutze's skill as a landscape painter rivaled his talent as a portrait and history painter, subjects for which he was better known.

The fifty-two-year-old Leutze was living in the nation's capital when he died of a heat stroke on July 18, 1868.

Thomas Hewes Hinckley (1813–1896)
Stag in the Adirondacks
Oil on canvas, 36 x 29 in., 1866
Gift from the Trustees of the
Corcoran Gallery of Art (Gift of Captain
Robert M. Hinckley, USN [ret.], 1965)

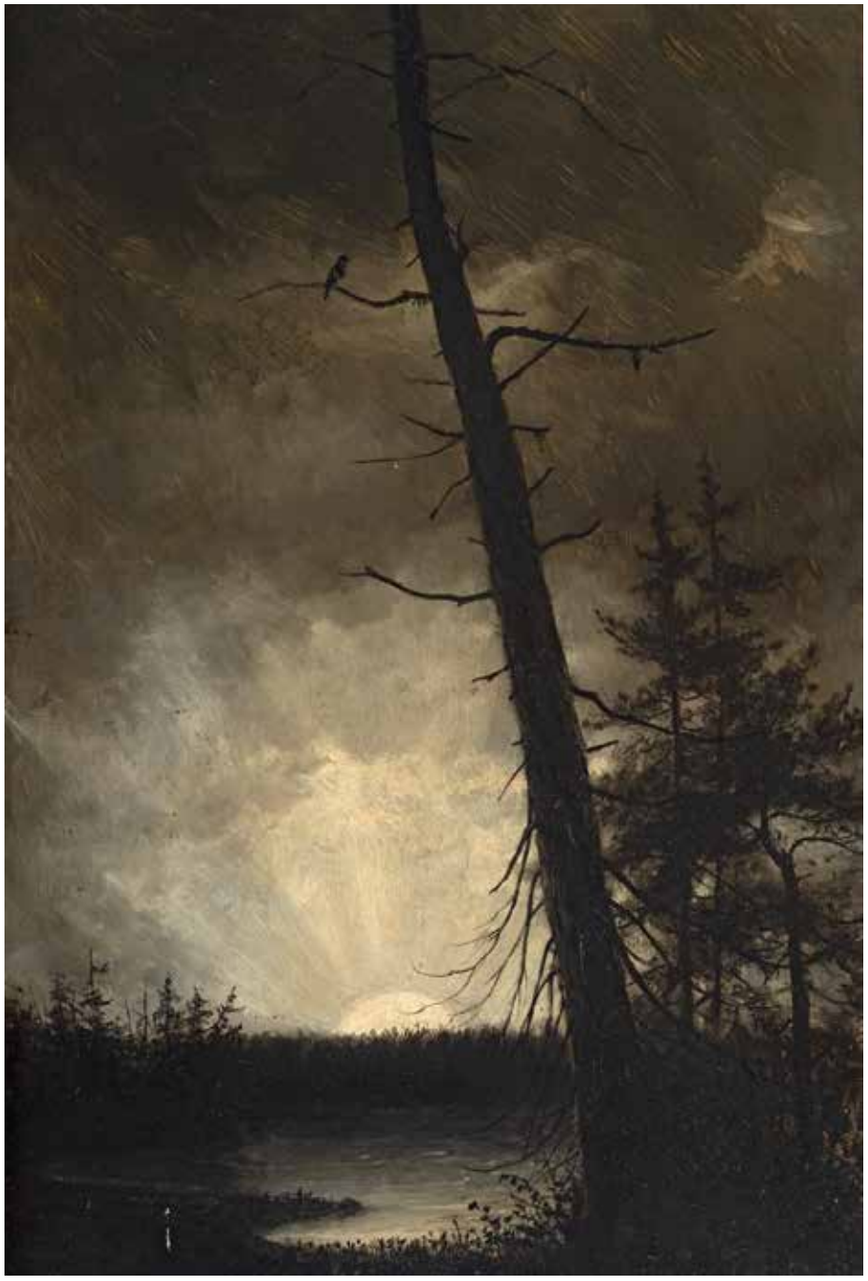
Thomas Hewes Hinckley trained with artist William Mason (active 1808—1841) in Philadelphia in the early 1830s, but with the exception of a trip to Europe in 1851 and his journey to California in 1870, he painted mostly in and near Milton, Massachusetts, where he maintained a studio in the house where he was born and later died. He began his career painting signs and portraits, but he did not find success until the late 1830s when he made animals the focus of his work. Among his clients was Daniel Webster (1782–1852), who commissioned him to paint the Ayrshire cattle that graced his Marshfield, Massachusetts, farm.

While in Europe in 1851, Hinckley spent time studying the work of English artist Sir Edwin Henry Landseer (1802–1873). The pose of the male red deer and the use of landscape as backdrop in *Stag in the Adirondacks* makes a direct compositional and symbolic reference to Landseer's famous *Monarch of the Glen* (1851, Scottish National Gallery). Like its prototype, which was seen as an emblem of power amidst the natural splendor of the Scottish Highlands, Hinkley's stag, with its commanding view of the landscape below, is a metaphor for American strength and vitality. In all probability, Hickley used prints as the source of his image.

During the 1860s, Homer Dodge Martin, a native of Albany, New York, won accolades for the landscape paintings he created in New York City in his studio in the Tenth Street Studio Building from sketches he had made in the Catskills, the Adirondacks, and the White Mountains of New Hampshire. Admiration of these works, which were closely allied with those of other Hudson River School artists, led to his election as an associate of the National Academy of Design in 1868 and full membership in 1874.

Critical enthusiasm for Martin's mountain landscapes persisted well into the 1870s. In 1877 one critic wrote, "Mr. Martin has shown a fondness for mountain scenery, for communing with Nature in her secret haunts, an aptness in transferring her lineaments to canvas, and a praiseworthy patriotism in hunting for and perpetuating the loveliest scenes of American landscape." His words, while addressed to no specific painting, are an apt interpretation of the small but elegant and intense, *Little Falls, Adirondacks*.

Homer Dodge Martin (1836–1897)
Little Falls, Adirondacks
Oil on canvas, 10 x 8 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mr. James C. Stotlar, 1972)



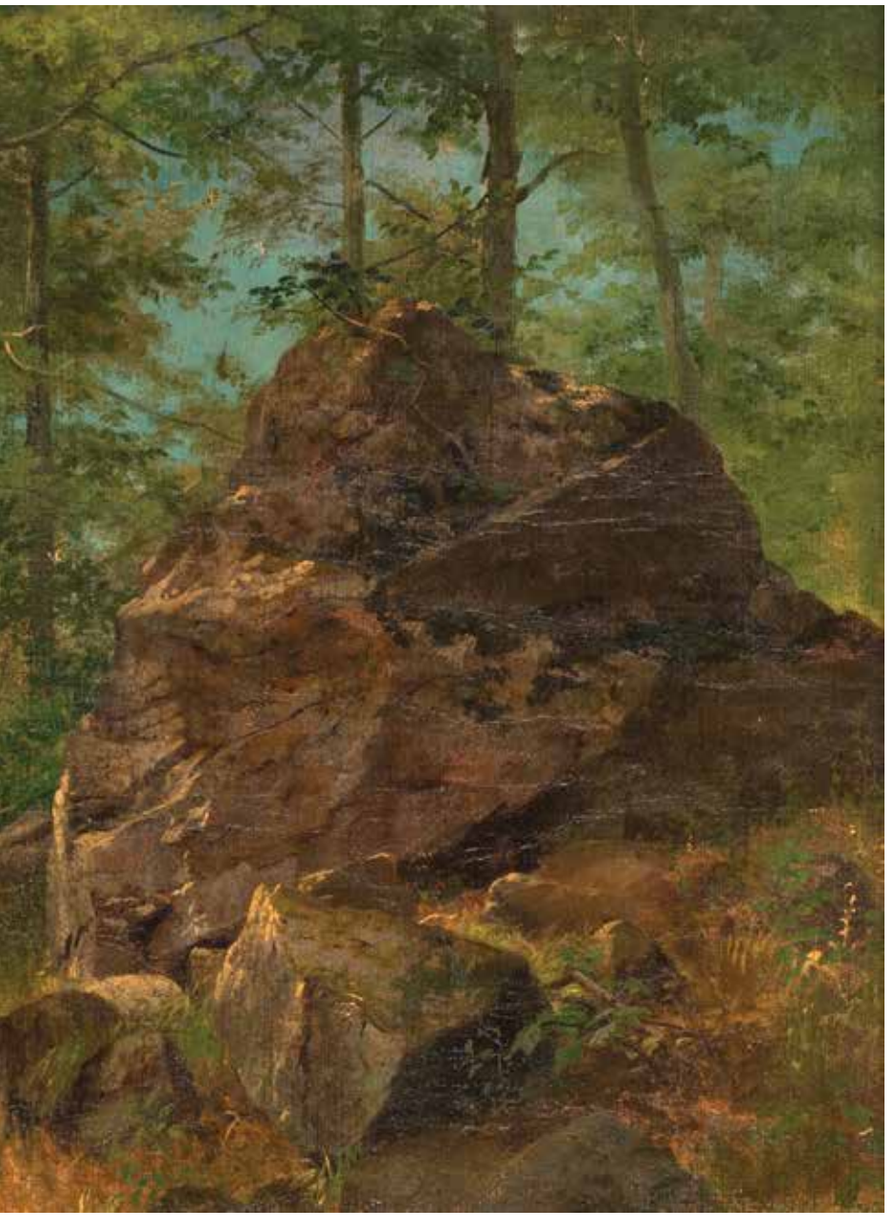
William Holbrook Beard (1824–1900)
Lone Patriarch
Oil on prepared academy board, 18 3/8 x 12 1/4 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of John Cresap Metz and Virginia LeClear Metz, 1986)

Born in Painesville, Ohio, William Holbrook Beard left few records of his early career. He seems to have studied art in New York City in the mid-1840s with his older brother James Henry Beard (1812–1892), a respected portrait painter. In the early 1850s he appears to have practiced his trade in Buffalo, New York, before he left for Europe in 1857, where he studied briefly in Dusseldorf, Germany. Back in New York in 1859, Beard quickly became an integral part of the flourishing art scene.

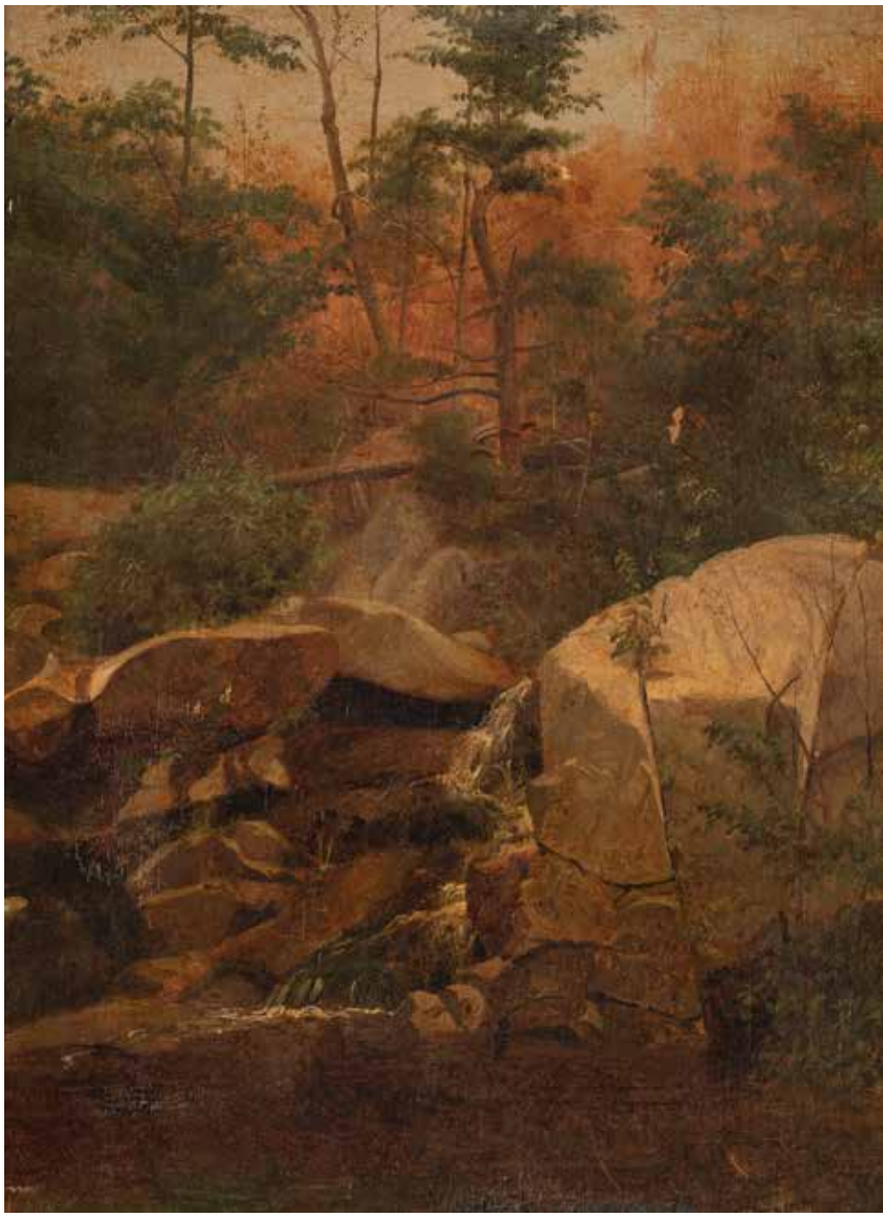
1861–62 were banner years for Beard. In 1861 he acquired space in the Tenth Street Studio Building. Gregarious and affable, he undoubtedly befriended numerous prominent artists who had studios there, among them Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902), Frederick Church (1826–1900), Régis François Gignoux (1816–1882), and Thomas Worthington Whittredge (1820–1910). That same year Beard, who first began to exhibit at the National Academy of Design in 1858, was admitted as an associate to the Academy. In 1862 his stature in the art world was confirmed when he was made a full member of the Academy.

Beard's popular reputation and a substantial part of his livelihood came from the amusing, often satirical, paintings he made of animals engaged in human activities. While these works dominate his entries to the exhibitions at the National Academy of Design, he was a talented artist whose oeuvre included portraits and landscapes.

Beard may have intended the small landscape paintings in the Corcoran Legacy Collection as self-sufficient works of art; more likely they were sketches for a larger painting, a familiar approach by artists at the time. Only one is dated, the other four could have been made at any time during his career. It is tempting to speculate that the two austere, more monochromatic works, so different from the lush, intensely detailed mountain scenes, were done while he was traveling in Colorado in 1866 with author Bayard Taylor (1825–1878).



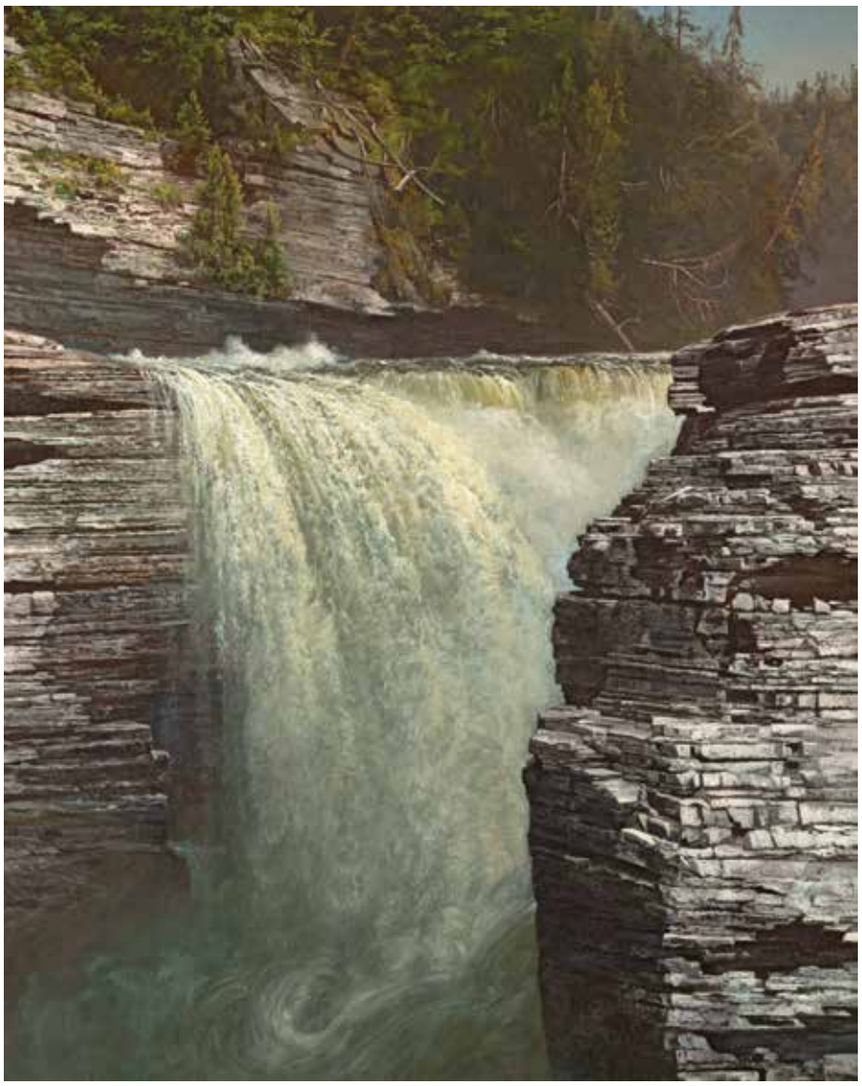
William Holbrook Beard (1824–1900)
Landscape
Oil on canvas, 17 13/16 x 13 5/8 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of John Cresap Metz and Virginia LeClear Metz, 1986)



William Holbrook Beard (1824–1900)
Landscape with Stream
Oil on canvas, 17 3/4 x 13 5/8 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of John Cresap Metz and Virginia LeClear Metz, 1986)

William Holbrook Beard
Faeries in the Mushrooms
Oil on canvas, 24 ⅛ x 18 ⅛ in., 1896
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of John Cresap Metz and Virginia LeClear Metz, 1986)

William Holbrook Beard (1824–1900)
The Drouth
Oil on prepared academy board,
12 ⅛ x 18 ¼ in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Gift of John Cresap Metz and Virginia LeClear Metz, 1986)



DeWitt Clinton Boutelle (1820–1884)
Trenton Falls near Utica, New York
Oil on canvas, 50 ½ x 40 in., 1876
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase through a gift of S.H. Kauffmann,
F.B. McGuire, E.F. Andrews, John M. McCartney,
Stilson Hutchins, and V.G. Fischer, 1979)

As a young man, Dewitt Clinton Boutelle, named after the popular governor of New York, left his hometown of Troy, New York, and in the early 1840s established himself in New York City as a talented young artist. Boutelle began showing his wooded landscapes at the National Academy of Design in 1846 and was elected an associate of the Academy in 1851, a status he maintained until his death. He participated in the three exhibitions presented by the Washington Art Association beginning in 1857. Restless, he moved in and out of New York City multiple times, ultimately settling in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Trenton Falls, about thirteen miles from Utica, New York, was a popular tourist destination beginning in the mid-1820s. Numerous artists painted the waterfall, among them John Kensett (1816–1872) (*Trenton Falls*, 1853, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston). Like other artists drawn to the site, Boutelle admired the energy and drama created by the rapidly descending water. Some critics have speculated that the specificity of detail in Boutelle's painting suggests that, in addition to on-site sketches, he may have used a photograph as an aide-memoire when finishing the canvas in his studio. Boutelle's attention to the stratified rock—equal if not surpassing his attention to the waterfall itself—may reflect his interest in mid-nineteenth century geological theory and the notion of geological time. The layered rock formation in *Trenton Falls* may be Boutelle's way of indicating his support for scientists who maintained that the earth was formed over time rather than in a moment of volcanic activity.

Andrew Fisher Bunner (1841–1897)
Picnic Party at Lake George
Oil on canvas, 29 ¼ x 23 ¼ in., 1874
Gift from the Trustees of the
Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase through a gift of
The Honorable David Jayne Hill, 1981)

As an artist who was born in New York and exhibited regularly at the National Academy of Design from 1865 until his death, Bunner's early artistic training is, surprisingly, almost unknown. He was clearly influenced by his peers affiliated with the Hudson River School. Drawings from his trip to the Catskills in 1866, now in the Corcoran Legacy Collection at the National Gallery of Art, and *Picnic Party at Lake George* indicate that he, like other Hudson River painters, found inspiration working on location. As was true of other members of the group, he pays homage to the vast, all-embracing power of nature. While towering trees surround the boat filled with small figures, the calm, undisturbed lake in *Picnic Party at Lake George* suggests that his message is one of the equilibrium between man and the environment.

Most likely Bunner finished this painting shortly before June 25, 1874, when he applied for a passport in anticipation of his several-years-long stay in Europe.

Willard Leroy Metcalf (1858–1925)
River Landscape
Oil on canvas, 9 ¾ x 14 ⅝ in., 1874
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Estelle Scharfeld Bechhoefer, 1965)

Metcalf was only sixteen and living with his family in Cambridgeport, Massachusetts, when he painted this charming sketch. Given that the several homes the family lived in before they purchased their home at 1 Alston Court in 1872 were only blocks from the Charles River, one senses in this lush and lovingly painted landscape a favorite scene chosen after years of childhood exploration.

Metcalf's parents recognized their son's talent and in 1876 he began studying with George L. Brown (1814–1889), a landscape painter living in South Boston. In 1877 he became the first student to receive a scholarship to the School of the Fine Arts Museum, Boston. In 1884 Metcalf's ambitions took him to Paris, where he took classes with Gustave Boulanger (1824–1888) and Jules Joseph Lefebvre (1836–1911) at the Académie Julian. Like numerous peers, he became interested in the work of the Impressionists and was among the first of the American artists to visit Claude Monet in his studio at Giverny.

In the early twentieth century, many considered Metcalf to be America's leading landscape painter. The Corcoran Gallery of Art awarded him the prestigious Clarke Prize in the 1907 First Annual Exhibition of Oil Paintings by Contemporary American Artists and showcased his work in a large retrospective, which opened just two months before he died of a heart attack in March 1925.

William Morris Hunt (1824–1879)
The Essex Woods
Oil on canvas, 22 ⅛ x 28 ¼ in., c. 1877
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mr. and Mrs. E.D.W. Spingarn, 1981)

William Morris Hunt (1824–1879)
Rapids, Sister Islands
Oil on wood panel, 11 ¼ x 17 ⅛ in., 1878
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mabel Stevens Smithers, the Francis Sydney Smithers Memorial, 1938)

William Morris Hunt, a Harvard College dropout from a privileged New England family, went to Europe with his mother and siblings in 1844. During the following decade, he studied in Paris with Thomas Couture (1815–1879) and came to admire the work of Jean François Millet (1815–1875) and other artists affiliated with the Barbizon School. Upon his return to America, he formed a studio and school in Newport, Rhode Island. Following yet another sojourn in Europe, in 1868 he established a studio in Boston, Massachusetts, where most of his students were women. A fire that destroyed his studio in 1872 led him to stop teaching. Freed from his urban commitments and willing to travel, Hunt, who was then better known for his portraits and figure studies, added more landscapes to his repertoire.

In the summer of 1876 Hunt discovered the small seaside village of Kettle Grove, now known as Magnolia and part of the town of Gloucester, Massachusetts. The following year, he built a studio in this North Shore resort favored by Bostonians. Here, in addition to beach scenes, he painted pastoral vistas inspired by the quiet woods in the interior of Essex County. Like *The Essex Woods*, they suggest a world that offers respite and restoration.

In May of 1878, Hunt traveled to Niagara, New York, to paint the falls, a popular destination for all Americans and particularly for artists after the critical success of Frederick Edwin Church's (1826–1900) *Horseshoe Falls* (1857, National Gallery of Art). While at Niagara, Hunt painted numerous canvases, many featuring an extensive view of the turbulent waters, symbol to many of America's inherent energy and power. *Rapids, Sister Islands,* is a sketch for a larger painting (1878, David Owsley Museum of Art, Ball State University). The small, vigorously painted image calls to mind Hunt's belief that a first sketch had more vitality than a reworked composition.

James David Smillie (1833–1909)
The Cliffs of Normandy
Oil on canvas, 41 ½ x 66 ½ in., 1885
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1907)

James David Smillie was the eldest of the seven children born to the noted engraver, James Smillie (1807–1885). While all five sons were engaged with the arts, James and his brother George (1840–1821) were the two who became best known for their landscape paintings.

James's gift to the art world, in addition to his paintings, was the diary he started in 1865 that meticulously chronicles his activities in the New York art world. Here one can read of his pleasure at showing at the National Academy of Design, beginning in 1864, and his acceptance as an associate of this career-shaping institution in 1865 and full membership in 1876. His diaries tell of his various trips to Europe and their impact on his career. His initial trip, in 1862, persuaded him to become a painter, not merely an engraver like his father. On his third trip abroad, in 1884, he spent July and August in Étretat. This quaint seaside town with spectacular views was a favorite retreat of both American and European artists, among them George Inness (1825–1894) and Claude Monet (1840–1926), although it was the American artist Henry Bacon (1839–1912) who persuaded James and his brother, George, who was also in Europe, to sample its quiet charm and spectacular vistas.

From sketches made the summer of 1884 Smillie developed in his New York studio this commanding image of the rocky landscape along the Étreat coastline. Some twenty years after its completion, in 1907, Smillie was invited to show *The Cliffs of Normandy* in the first Annual Exhibition of Oil Paintings by Contemporary American Artists at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. Staff and trustee enthusiasm for the painting prompted its purchase from the exhibition.

Homer Dodge Martin (1836–1897)
Mussel Gatherers
Oil on canvas, 29 ⅛ x 46 ½ in., 1886
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Bequest of Mabel Stevens Smithers, 1952)

Martin, who made his reputation as a critically acclaimed Hudson River School artist, took his first trip to Europe in 1876. He returned to France in late 1881 and lived along the Normandy coast, first in Villerville until 1884, when he moved to Honfleur. Side trips took him to Caen and Étaples, the well-known art colony frequented by Americans. No longer exposed to hilltop vistas or mountain sites like those in *Little Falls, Adirondacks*, Martin daily encountered vast expanses of sunlit beach; that experience as well as first-hand access to works by artists of the Barbizon School influenced his new work. As evidenced in *Mussel Gatherers*, he eagerly captured on canvas this new terrain of empty, low-lying dunes and khaki-colored sand, embraced by gently lapping water and hovering clouds. The limited palette reinforces a mood of isolation and palpable loneliness. In 1886 ill health forced Martin to return to America.

In 1853 Carl Christian Brenner emigrated from his native Germany to the United States with his parents. After a brief stay in New Orleans, the family settled in Louisville, Kentucky, where Brenner remained for the rest of his life. His artistic talent was recognized when he was still young and living in Germany, but it was not until the 1870s that he secured a solid professional reputation. He became known as "Kentucky's greatest living artist" and was elected to membership in the National Academy of Design in 1877.

The Corcoran Gallery of Art purchased his painting for $500, presumably attracted to the melancholic mood of this Southern setting. Shortly before the purchase, Edward Clark (1822–1902), fifth Architect of the Capitol, viewed the painting at the Washington home of Kentucky congressman James Proctor Knott (1830–1911) and commented on the midsummer scene, "... painted faithfully. I like it, but I don't say it's beautiful. Absence of color will make me think it is too green."

Carl Christian Brenner (1838–1888)
Afternoon in Early June, A Kentucky Beech Grove
Oil on canvas, 26 x 46 in., 1880
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1881)

Ralph Albert Blakelock (1847–1919)
Moonlit Landscape, the Witching Hour
Oil on panel, 16 ¼ x 22 inches, undated
Gift from the Trustees of the
Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Bequest of James Parmelee, 1941)

As a teenager Blakelock gave up the study of medicine, his father's profession, to become a painter. Essentially self-taught, he initially found recognition, at the age of twenty, when the National Academy of Design accepted his painting, *Morning—Near Devil's Den, White Mountains* (location unknown), into its annual exhibition in 1868. The title suggests the work may have caught the eye of the exhibition committee for its use of the pictorial tropes employed by established Hudson River School artists.

Unlike other artists of his generation, Blakelock did not seek to study abroad. He seldom ventured far from New York City where he was born. A rare exception was a trip West from 1869–1872.

Moonlight was Blakelock's favorite subject. Most of the paintings focused on this subject were done between the mid-1880s and the end of the 1890s. The Corcoran Gallery of Art owned two paintings on this theme, the other now at the National Gallery of Art. These heavily painted canvases, which Blakelock worked and reworked repeatedly, featured a moon in the center of the canvas surrounded by a still, cloud-filled sky. The terrain below usually featured loosely articulated trees that punctuated the nighttime sky and a body of water that reflected the light of the moon, while the rest of the landscape remained enveloped in shadows. Paul Auster (1947–2024) in *Moon Palace* said of *Moonlight* in the Brooklyn Museum of Art, "It was not a landscape, it was a memorial, a death song for a vanished world."

In the early twentieth century, paintings by Ralph Albert Blakelock became wildly popular. Works that the artist had originally sold for less than one hundred dollars now fetched thousands. The pleasures of financial success escaped Blakelock. Beginning about 1891, he became mentally unstable and from 1899 until about 1916, he was institutionalized for schizophrenic delusions.

Ralph Albert Blakelock (1847–1919)
Indian Camp at Twilight
Oil on canvas, 7 ⅛ x 10 ⅛ in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Bequest of James Parmelee, 1941)

Ralph Albert Blakelock (1847–1919)
A Nook in the Adirondacks
Oil on panel, 10 ¾ x 9 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Bequest of James Parmelee, 1941)

Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait (1819–1905)
Springtime
Oil on paper mounted on composition board, 12 ⅛ x 18 ¼ in., 1899
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of James Preble, 1981)

Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait, born in England and largely self-taught, immigrated to America in 1850. A George Catlin (1796–1872) exhibition he saw in Paris inspired him to settle in America, where he quickly became part of New York City's art scene. Shortly after his arrival, he established a summer painting camp in the Adirondacks. In 1853 he was elected an associate member of the National Academy of Design and in 1858 elected to full membership as an Academician.

Tait was known for his paintings of animals. Like the paintings of French artist Rosa Bonheur (1822–1899), Tait's representations of serene farm animals found a ready group of admirers and many were published by Currier & Ives. In a world of increasing social change, images like *Springtime* appealed to collectors who sought a visual reminder of an idealized rural world of peace and plenty.

Peter Moran (1841–1914)
Pastoral Landscape
Oil on canvas, 22 ½ x 34 ½ in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Vinton Liddell Pickens, 1963)

English-born Peter Moran was only three years old when his family immigrated to America, and after a year in Baltimore, settled in Philadelphia in 1845. It must not have been easy to be the fifth of seven children and to have two successful artists as older brothers, Edward (1829–1901) and Thomas (1837–1926), one known for his marine paintings, the other for his powerful and wildly popular views of the Rocky Mountains.

Peter's brothers encouraged his artistic talent and were his first teachers. Although he traveled West with his brother Thomas on numerous occasions, beginning in the mid-1860s, and made paintings of the people and places he saw in New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and Wyoming, his oeuvre is dominated by his paintings of animals, a theme which occupied him over successive decades. Some are calm, peaceful bucolic scenes, implying the joys of country life in a century that was becoming increasingly urbanized and industrialized; others, like *Pastoral Landscape,* are an essay in anxiety, as dark storm clouds imply unwelcome change.

John Francis Murphy (1853–1921)
Landscape
Oil on canvas, 24 ⅛ x 36 ⅛ in., 1898
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(William A. Clark Collection, 1926)

John Francis Murphy, a mainly self-taught artist from Oswego, New York, moved with his family to Chicago in 1868. He was only twenty-two when he settled in New York seven years later, but he immediately became a welcomed presence among the city's young and ambitious painters. He had his first painting accepted for display at the National Academy of Design in 1876 where he became a life-long exhibitor. Full membership in the Academy followed a decade later. Murphy maintained a studio in New York City's famed Chelsea Hotel until his death, but his desire to escape the city in the summer led him to establish the Pakatakan Artists Colony in Arkville, New York, in the mid-1880s. George Smillie (1840–1923) was a frequent visitor and Alexander Wyant (1836–1892) was one of several artists who built a studio there.

Murphy counted himself among the artists who admired the paintings of George Inness (1825–1894). His 1898 *Landscape*, bathed in the golden light of sunset, pays homage to Inness and his quest for mood and a unified, muted palette. Murphy's small undated painting echoes similar impulses, but here a palette of blue, green, gray, and brown suggest it is daytime, as the unseen visitor chances upon the isolation and emotional emptiness of an abandoned farm.

John Francis Murphy (1853–1921)
Landscape
Oil on canvas mounted on wood panel, 7 ⅛ x 9 ⅛ in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Richard Madlener, 1969)

John Robinson Tait (1834–1908)
A Hazy Day – Upper Delaware
Oil on canvas, 18 x 24 in., c. 1889
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hilton Simmons, in memory
of Charles E. and Rena Whiting [Carr] Simmons,
by exchange, 2005)

John Robinson Tait was born in the prosperous Midwestern city of Cincinnati, Ohio. William Louis Sonntag (1822–1900) provided his initial artistic training as well as friendship. In 1853 Tait accompanied Sonntag and artist Robert S. Duncanson (1821/22–1872) on a trip to Europe. Charmed by all he saw, in 1859 he published *European Life, Legend, and Landscape*, an enthusiastic guide to all the wonderful sites a traveler could see while living abroad. That same year he also published a book of his poems, *Dolce far niente*. Later in his life he would become known for his art and cultural criticism.

Tait returned to Europe in 1860, to study and work in Dusseldorf, Germany. The fruits of his labors found their way to an entry in the Paris Salon of 1864. By 1872 he was married and living in Baltimore, but his love of travel, both local and foreign, never ceased. His Salon entry of 1876, *Evening by Lake Shore* (1876, Baltimore Museum of Art), speaks of his stay in Munich, Germany (1873–1876), while *A Hazy Day – Upper Delaware* captures his visit to a regional tourist destination, still popular today. This and other Tait paintings suggest he sketched on site and completed his carefully conceived landscapes in his studio, a practice not uncommon among nineteenth-century landscape painters.

George Henry Smillie (1840–1921)
Autumn on the Massachusetts Coast
Oil on canvas, 25 ½ x 50 ½ in., 1888
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Gift of Ralph Cross Johnson, 1897)

George Henry Smillie (1840–1921)
A Long Island Farm
Oil on canvas, 19 x 33 in., c. 1900
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1900)

George Smillie, like his older brother James David (1833–1909), initially earned his living as an engraver, the profession of their father. But by the mid-1860s, both brothers had turned their attention to landscape painting. George's paintings in the late 1860s and early 1870s featured scenes from his several trips to the Adirondacks with James David. In the late 1870s his paintings, whether done in Maine or Massachusetts, featured more open vistas. Coastal scenes, like *Autumn on the Massachusetts Coast*, with lower horizons and less abundant foliage, captured his imagination. Often these include a clearly delineated path, here with a figure wending its way toward the horizon, to guide the viewer's exploration of the sand and rock-strewn terrain.

Many of the pictorial devices Smillie used in the coastal paintings he completed in New England found their way into the scenery he found on Long Island, which he first visited in 1882. Like the many artists who painted on Long Island in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Smillie enjoyed the charming countryside's proximity to his urban studio. It particularly pleased him that without traveling across the ocean he could find the same picturesque details others found in Europe. As he explained to one visitor, "The gardens and orchards, the lanes, barns, and shrubbery, are all English, while the meadows stretching to low horizons, the windmills with their delicate white vanes outlined against the sky are Dutch."

Alexander Helwig Wyant (1836–1892)
View from Mount Mansfield, New York
Oil on canvas, 36 ¾ x 60 1/5 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1901)

Born in the eastern Ohio city of Fort Washington and raised in the northwestern Ohio city of Defiance, Wyant molded his career as an artist on his admiration of paintings by George Inness (1825–1894), which he saw in 1857 in Cincinnati, then the art capital of the state. In subsequent years, he met Inness in New York and the artist's guidance led him to seek support from Cincinnati art patron Nicholas Longworth (1783–1863). Longworth's financial backing enabled Wyant to move to New York in 1863 and take classes at the National Academy of Design. In 1865, shortly before he left for a year of study in Europe, he had two paintings on display at the Academy, where he would exhibit yearly until his death. He was named a full Academician in 1869.

Mount Mansfield—not to be confused with the well-known, similarly named area in Vermont—is in Cattaraugus County in southwestern, New York, near the Pennsylvania border. What drew Wyant to this area is not known, but the sense of solitude and quiet calm of this isolated rural area is typical of numerous landscapes that he painted using a palette of subdued colors.

William Trost Richards, a Philadelphia native who spent summers in Atlantic City and on New Jersey's Cape May, settled in Newport, Rhode Island, in 1890. Initially an admirer of the wooded landscapes of the Hudson River School artists, he ultimately made his reputation on the infinite variety he brought to his paintings of the sea and its coastline. He painted *Scottish Coast* on the first of the seven trips abroad, beginning in July 1891, he took during the last fourteen years of his life. Richards once told a colleague of "the delight which I constantly feel in the beauty of air and sea." Evident here is Richards' pleasure in the way the water gently laps the massive rocks and the sun creates a kaleidoscope of changing color as it strikes the formidable embankment.

Scottish Coast was not the first painting by Richards to enter the Corcoran Gallery of Art collection. In 1883 William Wilson Corcoran and the trustees commissioned from Richards *On the Coast of New Jersey* (1883, National Gallery of Art).

William Trost Richards (1833–1905)
Scottish Coast
Oil on wood panel, 8 ¾ x 16 in., c. 1892
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of the National Academy of Design,
Mrs. William F. Brewster Bequest, 1953)

George Hitchcock (1850–1913)
Dutch Landscape
Oil on canvas, 17 ¼ x 21 ½ inches, c. 1889–1892
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Edward C. and Mary Walker Collection, 1937)

George Hitchcock came from a line of distinguished New England families. A native of Providence, Rhode Island, and an 1872 Brown graduate, he received his Harvard law degree in 1874. Practicing law held no appeal for him, and in 1879 he left for Europe, determined to be an artist. When he arrived in Paris, he entered the Académie Julian and took classes with Gustave Boulanger (1824–1888) and Jules Joseph Lefebvre (1836–1911). By the late 1880s Hitchcock's reputation was well established. He had paintings selected for the Paris Salon (1887–1890); he was included in the American art exhibition at the Universal Exposition of 1889 (where he also served as a selection committee juror); and important private collectors, among them Bertha and Potter Palmer of Chicago, were purchasing his work.

Hitchcock was one of the few American painters who remained abroad. In 1881 he settled in the small Dutch coastal town of Egmond aan Zee, where he was often in the company of American painters Gari Melchers (1860–1932) and Walter MacEwen (1860–1943). As he captured on canvas the colors of the Dutch landscape, he became known as "the painter of sunlight."

Edward Herbert Barnard (1855–1909)
Fields and Pastures
Oil on canvas, 30 3/8 x 40 1/4 in., c. 1895
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mrs. Mary Barnard Horne, 1928)

Edward Barnard thought he wanted to be an architect and from 1872–1874 took classes at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. But painting became a bigger draw. After studying at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Barnard set sail for France in about 1866. Like others from America, he enrolled in the Académie Julian and took classes with Gustave Boulanger (1824–1888) and Jules Joseph Lefebvre (1836–1911). Before he returned to America in 1889, he learned he had been accepted to exhibit in the American pavilion at the 1900 Paris Universal Exposition, and that he again had a painting in the Paris Salon. Both set the stage for his success in America.

While grateful for his classic art training, Barnard was among several other young Americans artists who admired the plein-air paintings of Claude Monet (1840–1926). Light-filled, calm pastoral vistas characterized his adaptation of Impressionism.

Robert William Vonnoh (1858–1933)
Silver Grey–Misty Autumn View
Oil on canvas, 25 x 30 in., c. 1910
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Bequest of Bessie Potter Vonnoh Keyes, 1955)

Opposite: Robert William Vonnoh (1858–1933)
Winter Landscape
Oil on canvas, 19 7/8 x 16 in., 1890
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Bequest of Bessie Potter Vonnoh Keyes, 1955)

In 1875 Hartford-born Robert Vonnoh began his artistic training in Boston at the Massachusetts Normal Art School (now the Massachusetts College of Art and Design). In 1880 he left for further study in France. In Paris he took classes with Gustave Boulanger (1824–1888) and Jules Joseph Lefebvre (1836–1911) at the Académie Julian. Vonnoh returned to America in 1883, but his first and lasting love was France, particularly the countryside about an hour south of Paris, near the Forest of Fontainebleau and the small town of Grez-sur-Loing. During the rest of his life, Vonnoh made many short and long-term visits to the well-known artists' colony at Grez-sur-Loing, sojourns that inspired both of these paintings.

Although he was classically trained, Vonnoh was among the first group of Americans to be enchanted by Impressionism and to incorporate its attitude and methods into his work. He subscribed to the idea that Impressionism was "the doctrine that natural objects should be painted or described as they first strike the eye in their immediate and momentary effect." For him, the role of the artist was to be the one "who attempts to render only the larger facts of mass, color, and effects without regard to exactness of form or completeness of detail or finish. "Impressionism," he asserted, "implies first the impatience of detail."

Julian Walbridge Rix (1850–1903)
Pompton Plains, New Jersey
Oil on canvas., 30 ¼ x 50 ⅛ in., 1898
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase, 1903)

When Frederick B. McGuire, director of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, wrote to Julian Rix asking for biographical information in 1903, the painter replied, "I never studied under anybody, I never took a drawing or painting lesson in my life. All I know I found out working out of doors from nature...." Experience and age may have reshaped his memory. An 1896 article titled "San Francisco Art Students Who Have Become Famous" lists him as a former student of the San Francisco School of Design "for several years."

Compared to other artists of his generation, Vermont-born Rix was a bit of a contrarian. He did not travel or study abroad. He moved to California in the late 1860s where his father, a judge, lived; despite a growing reputation and the critical success of his California landscapes, he chose not to settle in the West, as did several of his peers, but to return to the East Coast. He established a studio in Pompton, New Jersey, in the early 1880s. There, during the last two decades of his life, pastoral views of the surrounding countryside provided inspiration for numerous paintings.

John Elwood Bundy (1850–1903)
Path by the River
Oil on canvas, 11 3/8 x 14 5/8 in., 1910
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Anonymous gift in memory of Helen Minshall, 1955)

"He sings naturally, in the language of color, the beauty of the Hoosier landscape," wrote an enthusiastic critic, enchanted by the Impressionist landscape of Indiana resident John Elwood Bundy.

Bundy moved with his Quaker family from North Carolina to Richmond, Indiana, as a five-year-old. His only formal art education was his brief encounter with Barton S. Hays (1826–1914), an Indianapolis painter who also mentored the young William Merritt Chase (1849–1916). In 1887 Bundy joined the faculty of Earlham College in his hometown of Richmond; by the mid-1890s the popularity of his sun-filled landscapes permitted him to leave teaching and focus solely on his art. Uninterested in avant-garde approaches to painting, he found in the art of the recent past a pictorial vocabulary useful for recording and augmenting the lovely, serene world he found in the countryside not far from his studio.

Eager to expand his audience beyond the Midwest, Bundy often accepted invitations to show in major group exhibitions in New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Chicago. In 1910 *Beach in Winter,* a painting completed the same year as *Path by the River,* was included into the Third Annual Exhibition of Oil Paintings by Contemporary American Artists at the Corcoran Gallery of Art.

Charles Harold Davis (1856–1933)
Summer Pastoral
Oil on canvas, 29 ¼ x 36 ½ in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Bequest of George M. Oyster, Jr., 1924)

After completing his studies at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Charles Harold Davis set sail for Paris in 1880. Like many aspiring American artists of his generation, he studied for two years at the Académie Julian with Jules Joseph Lefebvre (1836–1911) and Gustave Boulanger (1824–1888). A financially successful American exhibition of his work in 1884 enabled him to spend the remainder of the decade in France. While abroad, his career blossomed. Beginning in 1881, he showed yearly at the Paris Salon and in 1889 he had four works on view in the American pavilion at the Universal Exposition.

When he returned to America in 1890, he settled in Mystic, Connecticut, where in 1913 he founded the Mystic Art Association. Low, verdant hills capped by billowing clouds in a sunny sky, typical of the regional landscape, became a familiar motif in his paintings. His style reflects his admiration of the Barbizon painters, although his light-filled imagery suggests he was not immune to aspects of Impressionism.

Beginning in 1907, Davis was a frequent exhibitor in the Corcoran's Annual Exhibitions of Oil Paintings by Contemporary American Artists, and in 1919, he won the second-place W. A. Clark prize of $1500 and a silver medal.

Paul Wayland Bartlett (1865–1925)
Lily Pond
Oil on canvas, 10 5/8 x 8 5/8 x 5/8 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mrs. Armistead Peter III [Caroline Ogden-Jones Peter], 1964)

Paul Wayland Bartlett (1865–1925)
Trees
Oil on canvas, 9 x 7 1/8 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mrs. Armistead Peter III [Caroline Ogden-Jones Peter], 1964)

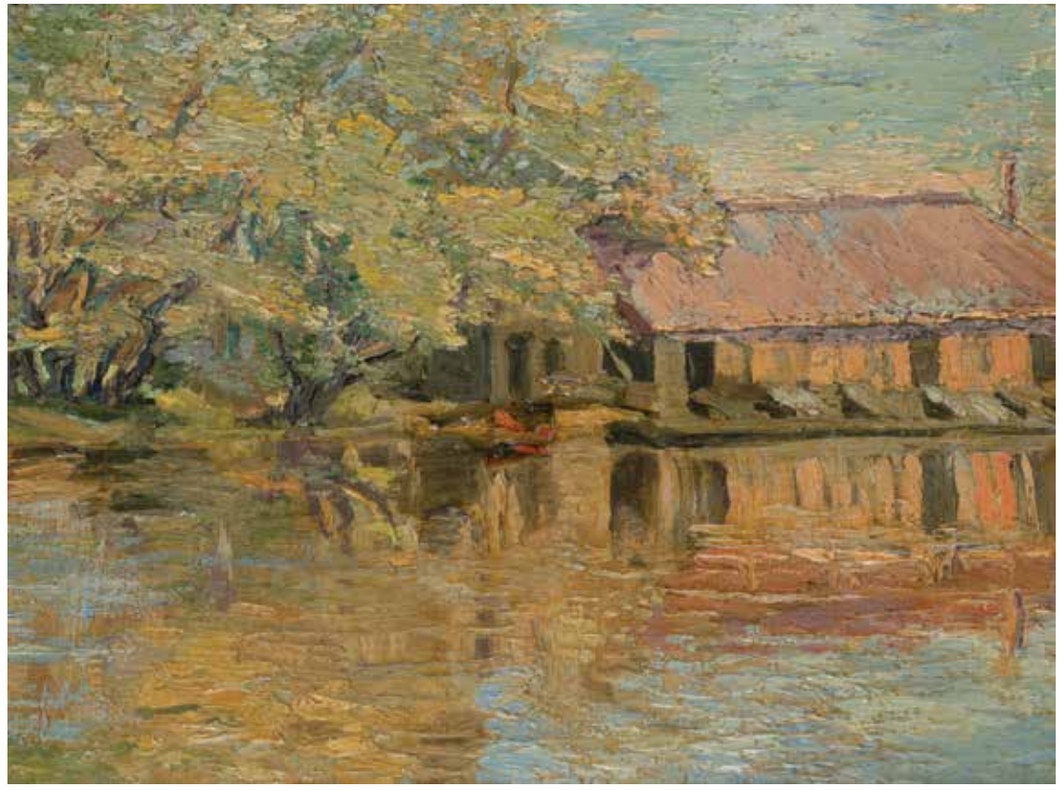
Paul Wayland Bartlett was just eight-years-old when his father, sculptor Truman Howe Bartlett (1835–1922), sent him to France to study. At age fifteen he was admitted to the École des Beaux Arts. Following in his father's footsteps, he became one of America's premier sculptors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with notable commissions here and abroad.

In 1908 Bartlett was awarded the commission for the pediment of the House of Representatives, an elaborate figurative work, which represented the Apotheosis of Democracy. In 1910, to complete this sculpture, Bartlett built a Washington, DC, studio at 237 Randolph Place, NE. He cemented his connection to the capital city when he married Suzanne Emmons (1861–1954), widow of noted geologist Samuel Franklin Emmons (1841–1911), at her home, 1721 H Street, NW, on April 29, 1913.

A decade after Mrs. Bartlett died, her daughter Caroline Ogden-Jones (1895–1965), who had married Armistead Peter III (1896–1983) in 1921 and was living at Tudor Place, gave twenty-one Bartlett sketches to the Corcoran Gallery of Art. She suggested that most of these were done while Bartlett was on holiday abroad. More likely, the selection shown here were painted in America.

While working on the Pediment for the House of Representatives, Bartlett also maintained a studio in New York. These charming images suggest that when not in Washington, he enjoyed sketching in one of the local parks or at the home of a fellow artist.

Opposite:
Paul Wayland Bartlett (1865–1925)
Woods and Pasture
Oil on canvas, 12 1/8 x 9 1/8 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mrs. Armistead Peter III [Caroline Ogden-Jones Peter], 1964)



Paul Wayland Bartlett (1865–1925)
Pile Driver and Docks
Oil on canvas on board, 9 7/8 x 12 1/8 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mrs. Armistead Peter III [Caroline Ogden-Jones Peter], 1964)

Opposite, from top:
Paul Wayland Bartlett (1865–1925)
Building by the Water
Oil on canvas, 7 1/4 x 9 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mrs. Armistead Peter III [Caroline Ogden-Jones Peter], 1964)

Paul Wayland Bartlett (1865–1925)
Cottage on the Creek
Oil on canvas, 7 1/8 x 9 1/8 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mrs. Armistead Peter III [Caroline Ogden-Jones Peter], 1964)

William Keith emigrated from Scotland with his mother and sisters in 1850. His early experience with art was as a wood engraver. His illustrations appeared in diverse publications, among them *Harper's Magazine* and the *London Daily News*. A job offer took him to San Francisco. About 1868 he abandoned the printing profession and began painting. To hone his skills with this new-to-him medium, he studied in Dusseldorf, Germany, 1869–1871. While in Europe, he traveled to France where he became familiar with paintings by the Barbizon artists. California scenes became the source of his subject matter when he returned to America. In *By the Creek, Sonoma*, he is less interested in the topographical representation of a location than in evoking a spiritually inclined interpretation of the natural setting.

William Keith (1838–1911)
By the Creek, Sonoma
Oil on canvas, 40 ¼ x 50 ¼ in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1911)

Arthur Bowen Davies (1862–1928)
Before Sunrise
Oil on canvas, 18 ¼ x 40 ¼ in., 1905
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Bequest of Lizzie P. Bliss, 1931)

An exhibition in his hometown of Utica, New York, featuring the work of George Inness (1825–1894) and various Hudson River School artists spurred Davies' interest in art. His family's move to Chicago enabled him to take lessons, from 1879–1882, at the Academy of Design, the forerunner of the Art Institute of Chicago. By 1885 Davies had moved to New York City, where in the following decades he would become an important figure in the art world. He is perhaps best known as president of the Association of American Painters and Sculptors, an organization formed in 1911 to protest the conservative nature of the National Academy of Design. The Association, led by Davies, was the force behind the 1913 International Exhibition of Modern Art, popularly known as the Armory Show. Davies was also the initial art advisor to the donor of this painting, Lillie P. Bliss (1864–1931), who was a founding member of the Museum of Modern Art.

Before Sunrise is a schematic rendering of the scenery Davies saw in the Sierra Mountains during his 1904 trip to California. As critics of the time noted, it is a blend of poetic inspiration and fidelity to nature.

Louis Michel Eilshemius (1864–1941)
Idyls Bathing
Oil on canvas, 18 ¾ x 30 in., 1917
Gift from the Trustees of the
Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Bequest of George Biddle, 1974)

Louis Michel Eilshemius (1864–1941)
Two Girls Bathing
Oil on composition board,
19 ¾ x 30 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the
Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of James N. Rosenburg, 2004)

Louis Michel Eilshemius (1864–1941)
New Mexico
Oil on Masonite, 13 ½ x 19 in., 1900
Gift from the Trustees of the
Corcoran Gallery of Art (Gift of
The Honorable Francis Biddle, 1960)

Louis Michel Eilshemius (1864–1941)
Two Men by Campfire
Oil on paper mounted to Masonite, 10 x 13 3/8 in., undated
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Olga Hirshhorn, 2004)

Louis Michel Eilshemius, the sixth of eight children, was born to a wealthy New Jersey family. As an eleven-year-old, he and a brother were sent to school in Europe, first in Geneva, Switzerland, and later in Dresden, Germany. When he returned to New York in 1881, he was eager to pursue the interest in art he had gained while abroad, but he faced formidable family opposition. Not until 1884 was he able to enroll in classes at the Art Students League (1884–1886). He next spent nearly a year in Paris where he studied at the Académie Julian. In the summer of 1887, he took private lessons in Antwerp, Belgium, with landscape painter Joseph van Luppen (1834–1891) before returning to New York.

He initially found few clients for his idiosyncratic work. For many years, funds from his father's estate enabled Eilshemius to support himself and travel extensively. Popular interest in his art dates to 1917. Two of his paintings appeared that year in an exhibition in New York, organized by the Society of Independent Artists, and caught the attention and praise of avant-garde guru Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968). Duchamp's continued enthusiasm, as well as subsequent exhibitions organized by the Société Anonyme and dealers, led to acquisitions by museums and prominent collectors in the decades before Eilshemius' death.

With the exception of the painting done in New Mexico, the landscapes in Eilshemius's paintings are merely backdrops for his imaginative fantasies. Eilshemius' own words offer a guide to his approach to painting. "The important mission of the artist," he wrote, "is to portray scenes which the layman neglects to see in nature; to show beauties which the public never think of beholding; and to imbue his paintings with a thought that is not commonplace. In short, he must uplift the spectator's mind to higher planes."

Maurice Brazil Prendergast (1859–1924)
A Dark Day
Oil on panel, 10 ½ x 13 ¼ in., c. 1902–1904
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mrs. Charles Prendergast in memory of Charles and Maurice Prendergast, 1991)

Maurice Prendergast was eleven when he and his younger brother Charles James (1863–1948), who also became an artist, moved with their family from their birth city, St. John's, Newfoundland, to Boston. Although he found early employment in Boston with a commercial artist, his approach to art was shaped by his four-year stay in France (1891–1895). In Paris, he studied briefly at the Académie Colarossi, but it was while at the Académie Julian that he came to admire the work of Pierre Bonnard (1867–1947) and Jean-Édouard Vuillard (1868–1940), who were among a group of Post-Impressionist artists known as Les Nabis. With their brilliantly colored, highly decorative paintings, the Nabis sought to distance themselves from both Academic and Impressionist painting. Their goal was to create works that were personal interpretations of the external world rather than a transcription of nature. Prendergast happily adopted this point of view in his paintings of landscapes and everyday life.

In France, Prendergast made numerous sketches of street life. Parisians leisurely strolling in urban parks and groups enjoying themselves in tree-filled settings became familiar themes in his work. The generalized rendering of trees and figures created with small, quick brush strokes in *A Dark Day* is typical of his approach to painting, although the somber palette is relatively unique for Prendergast, who is known for his use of brilliant color.

This painting was first shown at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in 1907 in the First Annual Exhibition of Oil Paintings by Contemporary American Artists.

Maurice Brazil Prendergast (1858–1924)
St. Malo
Oil on board, 10 5/8 x 13 3/4 in., c. 1909–1910
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Mrs. Charles Prendergast in memory of Charles and Maurice Prendergast, 1991)

After his initial stay in France, Prendergast spent more than twelve years in America before he returned in late May 1907. He was eager to revisit St. Malo, the seacoast town in northwest Brittany that he had known as a student. After several weeks in Paris, where he saw work by Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) at the Champs de Mars, he arrived in this historic port in late June. He spent the next two months creating more than thirty-five oils, as well as watercolors and pencil sketches. With rapid daubs of paint, like those in *St. Malo*, he captured the beauty and energy he found in the setting. Working with a palette of blue, white, gray, and brown, Prendergast gives the viewer a sense of the weather, as the cloud-covered sky echoes the turbulent motion of the wind-blown water and the angle of the sail speaks to the force of the wind as it propels the small boat safely past the outcropping of rocks.

Ben [Benjamin] Foster (1852–1926)
Sunset in the Litchfield Hills
Oil on canvas, 30 x 36 in., c. 1910
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1911)

Ben Foster was thirty before personal circumstances permitted him to take classes in New York at the Art Students League, where his primary instructor was Albert H. Thayer (1849–1921). Public acceptance of his work came quickly. While still a student, he exhibited at the National Academy of Design in 1884. In 1886, he left for further study in Paris. The following year his painting, *Forests of Fontainebleau,* was accepted in the 1887 Paris Salon. In 1897 he was elected as Associate Academician, gaining full status as an Academician in 1904.

Upon his return from Europe, Foster maintained a studio in New York, where he counted fellow landscape artist Gardner Symons (1861–1930) among his close friends. He usually spent six months of the year at his farm in Cornwall Hollow, Litchfield County, Connecticut, the site of this painting.

Sunset in the Litchfield Hills was purchased by the museum from the Gallery's Third Exhibition of Oil Paintings by Contemporary American Artists. The following year it was included in Foster's solo exhibition at the Gallery. The critic for the *Washington Post* called Foster "an exponent of truth in art" who seeks "to bring the simple life of the woods to city dwellers."

Foster was one of the last of a generation of Tonalist painters. In *Sunset in the Litchfield Hills*, the richly painted, muddy lane flanked by midnight-green trees and capped by an icy blue sky captures the raw, visceral, unremitting cold of a late winter day. While Foster's painting with its muted tones may address stylistic concerns of the past, the large mass of brown paint in the foreground with random gray brushstrokes suggesting rocks has a level of abstraction that speaks to emerging artistic interests among some of his contemporaries.

Albert Lorey Groll (1866–1952)
No-Mans' Land, Arizona
Oil on canvas, 40 ½ x 51 ¼ in., c. 1906
Gift from the Trustees of the
Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1911)

Born in New York to German immigrant parents, Groll travelled to Europe as a young adult for artistic training at the Royal Academy in Munich, followed by lessons at the Royal Academy, Antwerp. After time on his own in London and perhaps Paris, he returned to New York in 1890. His paintings of the American Southwest in the early twentieth century made his reputation.

Groll first traveled to the Southwest in the summer of 1904 with Stewart Culin (1858–1929), a noted ethnologist. Captivated by the sparse, heat-drenched landscape, he made paintings in the summer of 1906 that led to a year of considerable attention—a one-man exhibition at the Schaus Gallery in New York, a major prize for *Arizona* from the Pennsylvania Academy of Art, and an invitation to exhibit at the First Annual Exhibition of Oil Paintings by Contemporary American Artists, which opened at the Corcoran Gallery of Art on February 6, 1907.

A critic for the *Minneapolis Journal* captures the excitement of critics and collectors for his interpretation of the low, flat horizon and infinite space of the Sonoran Desert, so different from earlier Western landscapes like those by Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902). He admired Groll's use of color and the sense of motion he gave his clouds as they hovered over the still desert terrain. The critic was struck, too, by the uniquely "Americanness" of Groll's imagery. "He is doing for those plains what Corot, Rousseau and Millet did for the Fontainebleau-Barbizon fields and forests of France."

Chauncey Foster Ryder (1868–1949)
Cape Porpoise
Oil on canvas, 32 x 40 in., c. 1912
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1912)

In February 1891, Chauncey Ryder, who grew up in New Haven, Connecticut, married Mary Keith Dole (1868–1951) of Chicago. That fall, Ryder began classes at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The couple remained in the Midwest until 1901 when they left for Paris. Ryder first studied with Jean-Paul Laurens (1838–1921), who favored an Academic style, then enrolled at the Académie Julian where his American friend and fellow student Max Bohm (1868–1923) encouraged him to visit and work in the art colony at Étaples, the medieval fishing port in northwest France known for its broad beaches and extensive dunes.

Ryder and his wife returned to New York in 1907. While he maintained a studio there until his death, he moved his primary residence to Wilton, New Hampshire, in 1909. Summer excursions led him in 1912 to Kennebunkport, Maine. Just south of this coastal town was the fishing village of Cape Porpoise and the broad expanse of sandy beach today known as Goose Rock Beach. The spacious beach, cloud-filled sky, dunes, and gentle waves perfect for bathing, must have evoked fond memories of similar places in France.

Charles Herbert Woodbury (1864–1940)
Monadnock
Oil on canvas, 36 ½ x 48 ¼ in., 1912
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1919)

No American mountain has been painted more frequently than Mount Monadnock, the highest peak in southern New Hampshire, not far from the town of Dublin. Artists Thomas Hewes Hinckley, William Trost Richards, and Chauncey Ryder, all featured in this exhibition, recorded its imposing presence. Abbott Handerson Thayer (1849–1921), who lived a few miles from the mountain, often taught students in his rural retreat, and probably did the most to promote its artistic visibility in the early twentieth century. Its hiking trails also captured the imagination of the Transcendentalists Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Margaret Fuller.

From the early 1890s until his death, Woodbury, who was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, and trained as an engineer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, maintained a studio in Boston during the winter and summered in the small fishing village of Perkins Cove in Ogunquit, Maine. There he established a summer art school and in 1928 was a co-founder of Ogunquit Art Association. He became known for his seascapes. It is not known if a visit to fellow-artist Thayer inspired him to paint Mount Monadnock, but it is apparent that the undulating waves that dominated his seascapes found their counterpart in his interpretation of this massive mountain. Here specific details are of less interest to Woodbury than multiple areas of color, which verge on the abstract. The vertically arranged layers of the landscape, which defy traditional perspective, anticipate the focus of mid-century American artists in exploiting the flat surface of the canvas.

Theodore Wores (1859–1939)
White and Pink Blossoms
Oil on canvas, 16 1/8 x 20 1/8 in., 1921
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Gift of Dr. A. Jess Shenson and Dr. Ben Shenson, 1978)

Theodore Wores was born in San Francisco, where his Hungarian father settled following the failed Revolution of 1848. After Wores had completed his early training at the San Francisco Art Association's California School of Design, he spent his young adulthood in constant travel. In 1875 he left for Munich to study at the Royal Academy. In 1878, he attended the Munich art school established by the American painter Frank Duveneck (1848–1919) and later traveled with him and fellow students to Italy. Wores returned to the United States in 1881, but the years 1885–1887 found him in Japan; in 1901 he spent time in Hawaii.

During the 1920s, Wores painted numerous canvases filled with abundantly blossoming trees. It is likely his fascination with the evanescent beauty of orchards in bloom stemmed from his encounter with cherry trees during his time in Japan, but the paintings he completed in his sixties stemmed from direct encounter, not merely nostalgia. Wores frequently visited the Santa Clara Valley and later owned a home there. While today the area is best known as "Silicon Valley" and is populated by the headquarters of major technology companies, in Wores' day it was known for its orchards. The planting of fruit trees began in the 1880s; by the end of World War I nearly 80,000 acres were covered with many varieties of fruit trees.

George Gardner Symons (1861–1930)
Where Waters Flow and Long Shadows Lie
Oil on canvas, 50 ¼ x 60 ¼ inches, c. 1919
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1919)

In 1900, Gardner Symons returned to America after nearly a decade of study abroad in France, Germany, and England. He settled briefly in Chicago, the city of his birth and where, at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, he received his first artistic training. About 1903, encouraged by his friend and Chicago classmate, artist William Wendt (1865–1946), he set up a studio in Laguna Beach, California. Symons was a major figure in the region until he came East in about 1909 and established his home in New York.

By the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century, Symons was an exceedingly popular artist with major exhibitions at prestigious venues. In 1912 he had a solo exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, which featured four examples of his winter landscapes, the theme for which he became best known. Leila Mechlin, critic for the *Washington Evening Star,* praised his work: "Unaffected by tradition in the narrower sense, Mr. Symons goes directly to nature and translates her messages in term of sincerity and truth, combining color and form in brilliant and beautiful harmonies.... His pictures... are full of the compelling charm of life in the open and are painted with a broad technique and an unerring knowledge of drawing, color values and composition."

Symons participated in nine Corcoran Biennial exhibitions of Oil Paintings by Contemporary American Artists, beginning with the 1910 exhibition. *Where Waters Flow and Long Shadows Lie* was purchased in 1919 from the seventh exhibition in this series.

Opposite:
George Hawley Hallowell (1871–1926)
Wissataquoik River Drive
Oil on canvas, 25 ¼ x 30 ¼ in., c. 1920
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Museum Purchase, William A. Clark Fund, 1923)

George Hallowell came from an artistically inclined family. His father, Lewis Morris (1844–1909), was an architect; his mother, Harriet Cordelia Hawley (1843–1874), was developing her reputation as a painter before her early death; his sister Harriet (1874–1943) was an artist; as was his cousin Maria Mott "May" Hallowell Loud (1860–1916). His aunt, Sara Tyson Hallowell (1846–1924), was the first important woman art curator in America.

Hallowell studied art with landscape painter Harold B. Warren (1859–1934) before enhancing his skills at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where Edmund C. Tarbell (1862–1938), later director of the Corcoran School of Art (1917–1924), was chair of the painting department (1890–1913). He participated in numerous exhibitions in the Boston area. When John Singer Sargent (1856–1925) came to Boston in 1895 to install the first section of his religious murals for the Public Library, he saw and greatly admired Hallowell's paintings in an exhibition at the St. Botolph Club.

Hallowell frequently painted in the Maine woods, capturing the isolation in its vast untamed forests. In *Wissataquoik River Drive,* he focuses on the intersecting energy between man and nature as brawny men load massive felled timbers onto a rushing river swollen with water from melting snow.

Wissataquoik River Drive was acquired by the Corcoran Gallery of Art in 1923 from its Ninth Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Painting. Tarbell must have been pleased that his former student had been accorded this honor.

As an eighteen-year-old, Edward Redfield left his hometown of Bridgeville, Delaware, to study in Philadelphia at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. There from 1887–1889, he befriended fellow students Robert Henri (1865–1929) and Charles A. Grafly (1862–1929); together they left for France in the early 1890s to study in Paris. At the Académie Julian and at the École des Beaux Arts, Redfield worked primarily with William-Adolphe Bouguereau (1825–1905), an academically trained painter, but it was the canvases of Impressionists Claude Monet (1840–1926) and Camille Pissarro (1830–1903) that captured his attention.

With paintings admitted to the Paris Salons of 1891 and 1893, and now married to a woman he met in France, Redfield returned to America in October 1893. He settled in Center Bridge, Pennsylvania, not far from the better-known town of New Hope, where he lived for the remainder of his life. Redfield never tired of painting the countryside that surrounded him. Known as one of the founders of the New Hope Art Colony and the Pennsylvania School, which focused primarily on landscape painting, he received considerable critical praise for painting the American landscape with vigor and force.

Redfield was an extremely popular artist. He showed in every Corcoran Gallery of Art Biennial from 1907 to 1957. In January 1910, he had his first solo exhibition at the museum, featuring thirty-four of his paintings.

Opposite:
Edward Willis Redfield (1869–1965)
Road to Lumberville
Oil on canvas, 21 ½ x 19 ½ in., 1930/1935
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Bequest of James Parmelee, 1941)

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The literature on nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century American landscape painting is extensive, particularly references to the Hudson River School and its affiliated artists. Below is a list of sources with informative bibliographies that provide useful overviews of the various traditions of landscape painting represented in this exhibition. Three catalogs produced by the Corcoran Gallery of Art provide more specific information on the artists whose works were part of its American collection. The two earlier Corcoran catalogs cited in this bibliography reference exhibitions in which individual artists participated and awards they received, facts usually not included in the entries in this catalog. An artist's participation in National Academy of Design exhibitions and in the Paris Salons is derived from monographs that address these topics.

In the past two decades, internet Information about individual artists has grown exponentially. Listed here are several, but by no means all, websites that provide basic information on each artist in the exhibition or, in the case of ancestry.com, confirm specific details about an artist's life. Two newspaper databases, ProQuest and Genealogybank.com, are sources of quotes and data not retrieved from other publications. Some websites are subscription-only, but most museum, public, and university libraries have access to these sites.

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CAROLYN KINDER CARR

Carolyn Kinder Carr, formerly Deputy Director and Chief Curator of the National Portrait Gallery, received her B.A. from Smith College, her M.A. from Oberlin College, and her Ph.D. from Case Western Reserve University. Before coming to the Smithsonian Institution, Dr. Carr taught art history at Kent State University and the University of Akron, served as the art critic for the *Akron Beacon Journal*, and was chief curator at the Akron Art Museum, where the exhibitions she organized focused on contemporary art and photography.

At the National Portrait Gallery, Dr. Carr organized or co-curated numerous exhibitions, each accompanied by a catalog. These include *Gaston Lachaise: Portrait Sculpture; Then and Now: American Portraits of the Past Century from the Collection of the National Portrait Gallery; Hans Namuth: Portraits; American Art from the 1893 World's Columbian Exhibition; Rebels: Painters and Poets of the 1950s; A Brush with History: Paintings from the National Portrait Gallery; Retratos: 2000 Years of Latin American Portraits; Legacy: Spain and the United States in the Age of Independence 1763–1848;* and *Capital Portraits: Treasures from Washington Private Collections*. Her book, *Alice Neel: Women*, served as the basis for an exhibition she organized for the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

In 2008 the Spanish government awarded Dr. Carr the Encomienda de la Orden de Isabel la Católica. In Fall 2012, Dr. Carr was a Leon Levy Senior Fellow, Center for the History of Collecting, at the Frick Collection in New York. Research conducted as a Fellow appears in her most recent publication, *Sara Tyson Hallowell: Pioneer Curator and Art Advisor in the Gilded Age*.

In Fall 2022 Dr. Carr curated *Sitting Pretty: Two Hundred Years of American Portrait Painting from the Collection of the Corcoran Gallery of Art* for the American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center and wrote the accompanying catalog.

Opposite: **Andrew Fisher Bunner** (1841–1897)
Picnic Party at Lake George (detail)
Oil on canvas, 29 ¼ x 23 ¼ in., 1874
Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
(Museum Purchase through a gift of The Honorable David Jayne Hill, 1981)

The Corcoran Gallery of Art, one of the first private museums in the United States, was established in 1869 by William Wilson Corcoran and expanded in 1880 to include the Corcoran College of Art and Design with the mission 'dedicated to art and used solely for the purpose of encouraging the American genius.' In 2014, the Corcoran transferred the college to the George Washington University and distributed the works from its collection to museums and institutions in Washington, DC.

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Back cover: Chauncey Foster Ryder (1868–1949), *Cape Porpoise* (detail). Oil on canvas, 32 x 40 in., c. 1912. Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Museum Purchase, Gallery Fund, 1912).

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY MUSEUM
AT THE KATZEN ARTS CENTER

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