

Esther Frances (Francesca) Alexander

United States, 1837–1917

S. Zita, 1874–82

Brown ink on cream, moderately thick, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Dick S. Ramsay Fund, 82.33.1

In this exquisite drawing, a buttercup plant, rendered in fine, precise pen strokes applied in a stippled pattern, is nestled between the lyrics of an Italian folk ballad about Saint Zita. Although the floral decoration is not explicitly related to the song, the plant seems to interact with the verse, with a few bladelike leaves overlapping the text registers. An expatriate living in Florence, Francesca Alexander gained international attention through the advocacy of the famous English art critic John Ruskin, who admired her artistic naturalism and religious piety. Ruskin helped her publish a compilation of embellished song sheets, including *S. Zita, as Roadside Songs of Tuscany* (1884–85).

George Copeland Ault

United States, 1891–1948

Girl's Head, 1927

Graphite on moderately thick, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Maurice Vanderwoude in memory of Louise Ault, 81.250.1

Like many modernist portraits, this drawing displays dynamic tensions between illusionistic three-dimensionality and the flatness of the paper support, between representation and abstraction, and between individualization and idealization. George Ault reduced the forms of the head into simplified shapes, creating passages of shading that contrast starkly with the large areas of blank paper.

George Copeland Ault

United States, 1891–1948

Shipboard, 1924

Graphite on medium weight, cream, slightly textured, wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Manhattan Art Investments, LP, 2007.46

Depicting a cluster of smokestacks, ducts, and pipes on an ocean liner, this drawing features the kinds of mechanical and industrial imagery embraced by Precisionist artists as icons of modern America. A style that arose in the 1920s, Precisionism was characterized by simplified geometric forms and an absence of human beings. Here George Copeland Ault cropped the view of the ship's machinery in order to focus attention on the aesthetic potential of his subject—the play of rounded and linear shapes and dark and light tones—rather than its practical function.

J. Carroll Beckwith

United States, 1852–1917

Portrait of Minnie Clark, circa 1890s

Charcoal and pastel on blue-fibered, medium-weight, moderately textured laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of J. Carroll Beckwith, 17.127

In his tender portrait of Minnie Clark, J. Carroll Beckwith focused attention on his sitter's graceful beauty and direct gaze by rendering her facial features in greater detail than the sketchy forms of her dress and the setting. Clark, a legendary artist's model and close friend of Beckwith, also sat for Charles Dana Gibson (see Gibson's drawing on display nearby).

Albert Bierstadt

United States (born Germany), 1830–1902

Study of a Ewe, circa 1885

Black crayon and red and white chalk on blue-green, medium-weight, slightly textured laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Purchased with fund given by Mr. and Mrs. Leonard L. Milberg, 1990.101.2

In this detailed animal study, the landscape painter Albert Bierstadt used a combination of fine outlines and soft strokes to capture the woolly texture of a sheep's full coat with palpable realism. Most likely executed on a summer sketching trip in the German countryside during Bierstadt's years of study in Düsseldorf, the drawing is typical of his *plein air* nature studies, which provided the raw materials for his well-known monumental landscape paintings.

Ralph Albert Blakelock

United States, 1847–1919

Russian Gulch, California, 1869–72

Ink and graphite on medium weight, smooth wove paper

Pitch Pine, Point Arena, California, 1869–71

Ink and graphite on moderately thick, moderately textured, cream colored wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. E. LeGrand Beers in memory of Edwin Beers, 27.12, .17

While traveling in the American West, Ralph Blakelock produced more than 100 on-the-spot sketches, including these drawings of Point Arena and Russian Gulch, sites along the coast north of San Francisco. As is typical of this body of work, he executed each image in pencil and then traced over his graphite line in ink. While forms are described in economical outlines with minimal shading, his animated line—featuring jagged dashes, twists, and loops—foretells the expressive and idiosyncratic nature of his mature art.

Oscar Florianus Bluemner

United States (born Prussia), 1867–1938

The Harbor at Sea Cliff, Long Island, 1911

Crayon on cream, medium-weight, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Stuart Feld, 79.297.1

Featuring vibrant, unmodulated hues, this sketchily rendered harbor scene typifies the modernist Oscar Bluemner's interest in the emotional associations of color. According to his experimental theories, the blues and greens he used in the topography here symbolize serenity and the reds in the built structures indicate the vitality of life. More than descriptive, these expressive colors reflect the delight that Bluemner experienced in nature during his escapes from the bustle of New York City.

Robert Frederick Blum

United States, 1857–1903

Waiting for Aaron, 1880

Pen and ink in paper mounted to paperboard

Brooklyn Museum, Caroline H. Polhemus Fund, 15.521

Louis (George Louis Robert) Bouché

United States, 1896–1969

The Three Sisters, 1918

Graphite on cream, moderately thick, moderately textured laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Miss Ettie Stettheimer, 45.121

Louis Bouché's portrait of the three Stettheimer sisters—from left to right, Florine, Carrie, and Ettie—evokes the whimsical decorative style and material opulence of their New York apartment, the site of a salon frequented by Bouché, Marcel Duchamp, and other figures of the artistic vanguard. Although he treated forms in a simplified and Cubist manner, Bouché imbued each of his sitters with a unique personality, conveying their eccentricity and independence. Florine was herself a successful artist, Ettie was a writer, and Carrie was a hostess and creator of a dollhouse replica of the Stettheimer home (Museum of the City of New York).

Robert Brandegee

United States, 1849–1922

Anemones (Grasses and Flowers), 1867

Graphite on cream, moderately thick, smooth wove paper mounted to paper

Brooklyn Museum, Charles Stewart Smith Memorial Fund, 82.134.1

This minutely observed, close-up nature study of anemones demonstrates Robert Brandegee's dual interests, art and science. Alternating firm lines and soft touches of graphite and areas of shading and blank paper, the artist rendered the tangled vegetation with careful precision. Like William Trost Richards and Aaron Draper Shattuck (whose drawings are on view nearby), Brandegee worked in the tradition of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, which embraced John Ruskin's commitment to a faithful approach to nature.

Minerva Josephine Chapman

United States, 1858–1947

Woman in Profile, undated

Charcoal on cream, medium-weight, moderately textured laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs.

Morse G. Dial, Jr., 77.272

Minerva Chapman crafted this bravura portrait of an unidentified woman (possibly a self-portrait) with an intuitive understanding of the properties of the powdery charcoal medium applied to textured paper. She modeled forms tonally through sfumato, or smoky effects, reserving blank areas of paper for highlights. By turning the woman's face away from the viewer, Chapman conveyed a sense of her privacy and inner life rather than revealing her personality, as in a conventional portrait.

William Merritt Chase

United States, 1849–1916

Sketchbook, 1872

Graphite and black, red and white Conté crayon on cream and tan medium-weight, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Newhouse Galleries, Inc., 29.27.11

William Merritt Chase's knack for realistic characterization is evident in these deftly executed informal portraits, possibly representing his fellow students at the Royal Academy in Munich. This sketchbook contains numerous other portraits, as well as figure studies from a life class, rendered with different approaches—the linear style seen here and a softer, tonal one used on other pages.

William Merritt Chase

United States, 1849–1916

Self-Portrait Studies, circa 1886

Brown ink on off-white, medium-weight, moderately textured laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Newhouse Galleries, Inc.,
29.27.12

Charles Caryl Coleman

United States, 1840–1928

A Shower of Ashes Upon Ottaviano, 1906

Pastel on gray-blue laid paper mounted to board

Brooklyn Museum, John B. Woodward
Memorial Fund, 20.656

Joseph Frank Currier

United States, 1843–1909

Studies of Trees, circa 1880

Charcoal on cream, medium weight, slightly textured laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Mrs. John White Alexander,
31.202.1 – .4

Joseph Frank Currier's deep love of nature made him a committed *pleinairist* who regularly sketched outdoors, seeking to document nature's shifting moods. Each of these studies conveys an overall impression of the landscape rather than botanically specific detail. Currier captured the billowing canopies of trees with broad tonal masses made with rubbings and smudges of charcoal. He used the tip of the stick to articulate branches and other forms in dark lines. The expressive execution endows the natural world with a sense of dynamism, as if the trees are possessed of an inner life.

Felix Octavius Carr Darley

United States, 1822–1888

The Leech and His Patient, Illustration for “The Scarlet Letter,” circa 1878

Brown-black ink with graphite underdrawing on cream, thick, very smooth, highly calendered wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of William A. White, 15.484

Executed in the spare linear style that characterizes the work of F.O.C. Darley, this ink drawing portrays a scene from Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter* (originally published in 1850), in which Roger Chillingworth, a physician and Hester Prynne’s long-lost husband, tries to convince the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, her lover, to confess the secret affair. Notwithstanding the economy of his line, Darley used body language and richly detailed period costume and setting to dramatize the story. For example, Chillingworth’s crooked pose reflects his bent for revenge, and Dimmesdale’s gesture of clutching his heart alludes to the scarlet A (for “adulteress”) that Hester wears on her chest.

Arthur Bowen Davies

United States, 1862–1928

Nude, undated

Pastel on beige Japanese laid paper mounted to wood-pulp board

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Frank L. Babbott, 25.713

Stuart Davis

United States, 1892–1964

Serviceable Boxes Among the Rocks, 1917

Graphite on cream, moderately thick, moderately textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Purchased with funds given by Mr. and Mrs. Leonard L. Milberg, 1992.224

James L. Dick

United States, 1834–1868

Farmhouse in Brooklyn, 1863

Graphite on cream, medium-weight, smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Dr. Clark Marlor, 1993.38.4

Thomas Eakins

United States, 1844–1916

*“Thar’s Such A Thing As Calls in This World,”
Illustration for “Mr. Neelus Peeler’s
Conditions,” 1879*

Black ink with opaque white highlights on cream, medium-weight, smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn Museum Collection, 30.1452

Reproduced as an illustration for a story in *Scribner’s Monthly Magazine*, this monochromatic wash drawing contrasts the body language of an industrious wife and that of her perennially lazy husband, Neelus Peeler, who justifies his lack of employment by claiming to be awaiting his “calls,” or true vocation. Rigorously trained in the art academies of Philadelphia and Paris, Thomas Eakins approached human anatomy and spatial depth with exacting realism, particularly evident in the foreshortened figure of the Peeler’s son reclining on the floor.

Francis Williams Edmonds

United States, 1806–1863

British Isles Sketchbook, 1841

Graphite on cream, moderately thick, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Purchase gift of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard L. Milberg, 1999.6.2

Francis William Edmonds used this sketchbook during his three-week journey through the British Isles, recording important monuments he encountered along the way in places such as Warwick, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Stratford-upon-Avon. In one of the most striking sketches, combining precise outlines and exacting details, Edmonds rendered the Romanesque and Gothic architectural styles of Jedburgh Abbey, looming over the Scottish town. Since he was primarily a genre painter, this sketchbook provides a rare example of his work in land- and townscape composition.

Benjamin Osro Eggleston

United States, 1867–1937

Little Girl Holding an Apple, 1927

Graphite on cream, moderately thick, very smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Dick S. Ramsay Rund, 75.187

Although best known as a portraitist, the Brooklyn painter Benjamin Osro Eggleston also enjoyed sketching the interesting characters he encountered around the city—an activity that harks back to his early career as a newspaper illustrator. This assured drawing captures the forceful personality of an anonymous girl whose anxious yet determined expression suggests she is steeling herself for a confrontation, perhaps with other children trying to take her apple.

Kahlil Gibran

United States (born Lebanon), 1883–1931

The Burden, 1919

Watercolor and graphite on medium cream wove paper
Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Mrs. Frank L. Babbott,
21.277

The unusual and otherworldly subject of a small mother-and-child group held aloft by two large disembodied hands in this drawing typifies the imagery of the artist and writer Kahlil Gibran. Like his fellow Symbolist Elihu Vedder (whose work is displayed nearby), Gibran was preoccupied with the transcendence of the soul and the universal experiences of love, spirituality, and the life cycle. *The Burden* alludes to themes of maternal responsibility and the role of a divine agent guiding human endeavors.

Charles Dana Gibson

United States, 1867–1944

Young Woman Struck with Cupid's Arrows, circa 1900

Black ink on cream, medium-weight, slightly textured wove paper
Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Michael Cohen, 69.85

This alluring and emblematic portrait features the so-called Gibson Girl type, created by the influential illustrator Charles Dana Gibson as an embodiment of idealized modern womanhood. Characterized by her youth, independence, confidence, and beauty, the Gibson Girl proliferated in the visual imagery of turn-of-the-century America. Minnie Clark, a famous artist's model and the subject of J. Carroll Beckwith's drawing (on display nearby), served as the inspiration for this type.

Sanford Robinson Gifford

United States, 1823–1880

Italian Sketchbook, 1867–68

Graphite on tan, medium-weight, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Jennie Brownscombe, 17.141

This sketchbook served as a travel diary for the Hudson River School landscape painter Sanford Robinson Gifford during his journeys in France, Switzerland, and Italy. In this two-page spread depicting the church of Santa Caterina del Sasso, perched precariously on the edge of a cliff overlooking Lake Maggiore in Italy, Gifford's precise and assured lines exemplify his skills as a draftsman. A practitioner of *plein air* sketching, the artist used these drawings as preparatory studies for paintings executed later in his studio. The small framed motifs that appear on this and other pages of the sketchbook show his initial experiments with composition.

William J. Glackens

United States, 1870–1938

Merry Christmas (Yuletide Revels), circa 1910

Graphite, Conté crayon, ink and transparent and opaque watercolor on laminated board adhered to wood pulp board

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Ira Glackens, 63.58

Full of humorous vignettes, this work presents William Glackens at the height of his powers as a draftsman and storyteller. In a large room decorated for Christmas, throngs of children play with their new toys—often with painful consequences—while a few adults make futile attempts to control the chaos. Glackens's figure style is slightly cartoonish but incorporates descriptive details that endow each child with a distinct personality. Reproduced in *Collier's Weekly*, one of the nation's most popular magazines of the period, this image comments ironically on the innocence of children and the joys of the holiday season.

George Henry Hall

United States, 1825–1913

Sketchbook, 1852–93

Graphite and opaque watercolor on cream, blue, beige, medium thick, slightly textured wove papers

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Jennie Brownscombe, 16.758.1

George Henry Hall's large sketchbook contains highly finished images of locations in Italy and the northeastern United States, with the majority of pages devoted to his Italian travels in 1852. Since Hall is primarily known as a genre and still-life painter, this sketchbook provides a rare glimpse into his experiments with landscape composition. Executed naturalistically in graphite with accents of white watercolor, the drawings follow the picturesque landscape conventions established by the Hudson River School. These conventions include framing a distant panoramic vista with foreground trees or other vertical elements.

Marsden Hartley

United States, 1877–1943

New Mexico, 1918–19

Pastel on beige laid paper mounted to wood-pulp board

Brooklyn Museum, Anonymous gift, 39.274

Marsden Hartley

United States, 1877–1943

Mont Sainte-Victoire, 1926–27

Graphite on thick, roughly textured, cream-colored wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Dick S. Ramsay Fund, 61.4.1

As an homage to Paul Cézanne, the modernist Marsden Hartley spent a period living and working in the French artist's favorite landscape, Aix-en-Provence, in the South of France. As Cézanne had done, Hartley depicted the distinctive profile of Mont Sainte-Victoire repeatedly. In this spare drawing, he captured the stark monumentality and sculptural contours of the mountain while using a flatter and more economical treatment for the foreground valley, where he incorporated large areas of blank paper and rendered structures in faceted planes that evoke Cézanne's style. Although Hartley was working in front of the natural motif, he envisioned this landscape through the lens of Cézanne's art.

Robert Henri

United States, 1865–1929

Nude Perched on Chair, circa 1910s

Red crayon and graphite on cream, medium-weight, smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Theodore Leshner, 76.127.11

Constantine Hertzberg

United States (born Germany), 1833–1919

A Drawing Lesson, 1865

Black ink on thick, cream, smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Mrs. Tom Cochran, 19.186

Constantine Hertzberg rendered this detailed scene with remarkably fine and precise ink lines. In addition to demonstrating his masterful draftsmanship, the drawing reflects changes related to artistic training and gender in the latter half of the 19th century. This period witnessed the rise of the professional female artist, for whom drawing was a key component of artistic training rather than merely a genteel amateur accomplishment. At the time he made this work, Hertzberg was a drawing instructor at the Cooper Union School of Design for Women in New York, so the subject of his image could be autobiographical.

Stefan Hirsch

United States (born Germany), 1899–1964

Siamese Cat, circa 1940

Charcoal on cream, thin, smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Janis Conner and Joel Rosenkranz, 2008.69

Winslow Homer

United States, 1836–1910

Girl Seated on a Rail Fence, circa 1878

Graphite with opaque white washes on beige medium weight, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Frederick Loeser Fund, 28.210

Created while the artist was visiting a friend's country residence in upstate New York, this and the nearby drawing evince the immediacy of on-the-spot sketches. Winslow Homer described his rustic subjects with nimble and economical strokes of his pencil that capture the overall impression with minimal detail.

Rural children were a favorite subject for Homer and American audiences in this period. Their popularity was fueled by post-Civil War optimism, as well as nostalgia for pastoral life in the face of rampant industrialization and urbanization.

Winslow Homer

United States, 1836–1910

Study for "The Unruly Calf," circa 1875

Black ink on thick, cream, smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Mrs. Tom Cochran, 19.186

This deftly executed preparatory drawing for a painting is one of several works that Winslow Homer created about 1875 depicting an African American boy engaged in a tug-of-war of wits and brawn with a calf. A faint outline indicates that the artist experimented with the position of the calf's tail before settling on a final pose expressive of the animal's indignation.

Homer's images were praised by contemporary critics for their sympathetic and naturalistic treatment of blacks—a striking departure from the racist caricatures that proliferated in 19th-century visual culture. While rural children were a favorite subject of the artist, this particular work could also be a metaphor for the struggles of African Americans for self-determination during Reconstruction.

Winslow Homer

United States, 1836–1910

The Swimming Hole, undated

Graphite on beige, moderately thick, moderately textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Frederick Loeser Fund, 28.209

Winslow Homer

United States, 1836–1910

Two Girls in a Field, 1879

Graphite on cream, moderately thick, rough-textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Frederick Loeser Fund, 28.211

Edward Hopper

United States, 1882–1967

Male Nude, 1903–04

Charcoal (with possible additions of black crayon) on cream, moderately thick, moderately textured laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Morton Ostrow, 82.253.2

Edward Hopper invested this drawing with a bold frankness and palpable sense of realism that came from working from the live model in a class at the New York School of Art taught by Robert Henri, an influential teacher and leader of the Ashcan School of urban Realists (a drawing by Henri is displayed nearby). Hopper's skills of close observation are evident in the model's air of boredom as he holds the pose. The angled forms in the background suggest the tilted easels of other students, while the tiny sketch of a female nude at the upper right injects a note of bawdy humor. Hopper's graphic talents earned him a teaching position at the school in 1905 and, subsequently, a successful early career as an illustrator.

Edward Hopper

United States, 1882–1967

Standing Female Figure, 1900

Black ink and graphite on thick, smooth, beige colored wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Morton

Ostrow, 84.306.6

David Johnson

United States, 1827–1908

Sketchbook, Conway, New Hampshire, 1851

Graphite, chalk, and opaque watercolor on medium-weight, beige, wove paper, sketchbook

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Blair Efron, 1997.157

Eastman Johnson

United States, 1824–1906

Anatomy Sketchbook, 1849

Graphite on beige, medium weight, slightly textured laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Albert Duveen, 40.61

Eastman Johnson used this sketchbook while enrolled in an anatomy class at the Düsseldorf Royal Academy in Germany. The meticulous, almost scientific precision of his skeleton studies reveals the school's emphasis on draftsmanship and anatomical knowledge as fundamental tools for the artist. Many of the drawings include grids and other geometric guidelines, as well as notations about ideal proportions of the human body. Johnson parlayed his academic training into a successful career as a painter of American genre subjects.

Eastman Johnson

United States, 1824–1906

Three Dutch Figures, circa 1852

Graphite, watercolor and white chalk on brown, medium weight, moderately textured wove paper
Brooklyn Museum, Purchased with funds given by Mr. and Mrs. Leonard L. Milberg, 1990.101.6a-b

This sheet contains preparatory figure studies for a genre painting of peasants begging for alms at the door of a castle. Eastman Johnson's handling of the medium enhances his characterization: the loose, energetic quality of his line conveys the beggars' nervous desperation and bedraggled appearance.

Yasuo Kuniyoshi

United States (born Japan), 1889–1953

Baby and Toy Cow, 1921

Black ink on off-white, moderately thick, moderately textured wove paper
Brooklyn Museum, Bequest of Edith and Milton Lowenthal, 1992.11.22

With its imaginative arrangement of an infant, a cow pull toy, and other objects of personal significance, this drawing constitutes a symbolic portrait of the artist, who developed an idiosyncratic style combining Eastern and Western influences. Here the tipped-up perspective and asymmetrical composition suggest a Japanese aesthetic, while the figural distortions are indebted to American and European modernism. In the early 1920s, before turning to painting, Yasuo Kuniyoshi embraced the traditional Eastern practice of ink drawing, yet he manipulated the medium in unconventional ways, creating a range of textures and tones through the varied application of broad washes and delicate lines.

John La Farge

United States, 1835–1910

Study for “Sealing of the Twelve Tribes” Window, circa 1889

Graphite on yellow, translucent, smooth textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of George D. Pratt, 13.1063

John La Farge modeled these four robed figures with delicate graphite strokes that create subtle silvery tonalities well suited to the ethereal subject matter—a scene from the Bible’s book of Revelation in which an angel places seals on God’s faithful servants to designate them for salvation.

A multitalented artist, La Farge is best known for his stained glass and mural painting. Drawing played a crucial role in such decorative projects, and this sheet was a study for a stained-glass window in Trinity Church in Buffalo, New York.

Gaston Lachaise

United States (born France), 1882–1935

Back of a Nude Woman, 1929

Black ink on cream, medium-weight, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Carl Zigrosser, 38.183

This exuberant ink drawing conveys the powerful energy and voluptuous eroticism of the female nude—a favorite subject of the modernist sculptor Gaston Lachaise. Here he reduced the body to a flattened outline of sinuous curves, relying on the expressive quality of his line to animate the figure. Inspired by his wife and muse, Lachaise presented a new feminine ideal that endowed the classical Venus type with modernist forms and earthy sexuality.

George Benjamin Luks

United States, 1867–1933

Figure of a Man—Back View, undated

Black Conté crayon on off-white, medium-weight, smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Dick S. Ramsay Fund, 58.43.3

Early work as a newspaper illustrator made George Luks adept at recording quick, on-the-spot sketches, such as this drawing. Despite the cursory treatment of forms, he conveyed a sense of his subject's individuality through such details as the bunched sleeves, the distinctive fedora, and the creased skin at the back of the neck. The man's stance suggests that he—like the artist—has stopped to observe some urban spectacle. Luks constantly roved the bustling streets of New York City with sketchpad in hand.

George Benjamin Luks

United States, 1867–1933

Pony Ride, undated

Black Conté crayon on beige, moderately thick, smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Dick S. Ramsay Fund, 58.43.5

Reginald Marsh

United States, 1898–1954

Wall Street, 1931

Brown ink with graphite underdrawing on cream, medium weight, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Designated Purchase Fund, 77.232.3

Homer Dodge Martin

United States, 1836–1897

Newport, 1881

Black and white Conté crayon on moderately thick, slightly textured, green-grey wove paper
Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Mrs. William A. Putnam, 36.487

In this *plein air* sketch of Newport, on the Isle of Wight in England, Homer Dodge Martin outlined topographical forms and then used freer strokes of crayon to depict grassy areas and the hazy sky. The atmospheric and emotional qualities of this work indicate the growing influence of the French Barbizon School on American artists. Martin captured a sense of solitude in this landscape, with the only sign of human intervention represented by the fence and road in the foreground.

Henry Mosler

United States, 1841–1920

Portrait of the Artist's Daughter, 1883

Graphite on medium, cream, wove paper
Brooklyn Museum, Joseph F. McCrindle Collection, 2009.20.5

Jerome Myers

United States, 1867–1940

Central Park Concert, undated

Black crayon (probably Conté) on cream, medium-weight, slightly textured wove paper
Brooklyn Museum, John B. Woodward Memorial Fund,
18.165.1

Like the urban Realists of the Ashcan School with whom he was acquainted, Jerome Myers found inspiration in the everyday dramas of modern life. This sketch of concertgoers in Central Park combines his penchant for careful observation and quick, on-the-spot execution. Myers individualized the physiognomy and dress of each person, lightly sketching the forms and then reinforcing his initial conception with darker lines of crayon. Although there is no ostensible narrative, this scene suggests that music has the power to unify a diverse urban populace.

Elie Nadelman

United States, 1885–1946

Head, undated

Graphite on thin, cream, smooth wove paper
Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Virginia Zabriskie,
1997.202.2

Louise Nevelson

United States (born Russia), 1900–1988

Untitled (Standing Female Nude), 1932–34

Graphite on medium, white, smooth wove paper
Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Samuel Goldberg in memory of his parents, Sophie and Jacob Goldberg, and his brother, Hyman Goldberg, 78.277.4

This spare graphite drawing of a female nude torn from a spiral notebook is one of hundreds that Louise Nevelson created—almost compulsively—between 1929 and 1934, early in her artistic career, when she was experimenting with different media. Incorporating large areas of blank paper, her reductive and distorted treatment of human anatomy emphasizes the two-dimensionality of the picture plane. This flattening effect is counterbalanced, however, by the dynamism of her jagged line and the figure's monumentality.

Isamu Noguchi

United States, 1904–1988

Model, circa 1930s

Ink on thin, slightly textured cream colored paper
Brooklyn Museum, Dick S. Ramsay Fund, 41.975

Isamu Noguchi

United States, 1904–1988

Bending Figure, 1933

Ink on moderately thick, moderately textured brown wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Dick S. Ramsay Fund, 48.69.2

In this drawing Isamu Noguchi used a thick paintbrush to apply ink in serpentine lines and slashing strokes. By changing the pressure of his touch and twisting the tip of the brush, he varied the density and width of the outlines over the course of each stroke. Such variations suggest volumetric mass in an otherwise abstracted figure.

After studying traditional Chinese brush drawing in Beijing in the early 1930s, Noguchi combined that technique with the reductive approach to form inspired by his mentor, the modernist sculptor Constantin Brancusi. This blending of Eastern and Western influences characterizes the art of Noguchi, who was of Japanese and American descent.

Violet Oakley

United States, 1874–1960

Portrait of Mrs. J. Monroe Hewlett, 1937

Red, white, and black chalk (possibly Conté crayon) on beige, moderately thick, moderately textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of the Monroe and Estelle Hewlett Collection, 53.197

Edward Penfield

United States, 1866–1925

Sketches of Spanish Men, 1906

Watercolor and graphite on medium-weight, off-white, moderately textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of the Enoch Pratt

Free Library, 61.36.1 – .2

In these two works, Edward Penfield used controlled graphite outlines and watercolor washes to detail the tattered clothes and scruffy faces of working men he encountered during a 1906 trip through Spain. The frank realism of his approach gives his images a documentary authenticity; indeed, they were most likely studies for his illustrated travelogue *Spanish Sketches* (1911). While capitalizing on Americans' fascination with the picturesque appeal of Spain, Penfield also endowed his subjects with a dignity reflected in their proud bearing.

William Trost Richards

United States, 1833–1905

Forest Scene with Rocky Brook, 1864–67

Charcoal on cream, moderately thick, slightly textured wove paper mounted to paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Edith Ballinger Price, 72.32.2

William Trost Richards

United States, 1833–1905

Flower Study, 1860

Opaque watercolor and graphite on moderately thick, slightly textured brown wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Edith Ballinger Price, 72.32.9

William Trost Richards

United States, 1833–1905

Plant Study, 1860

Graphite on beige, moderately thick, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Edith Ballinger Price, 72.32.12

In their precise accuracy and close-up format, these two sheets of botanical studies exemplify William Trost Richards's commitment to the principles of John Ruskin, an English critic who promoted a "truth to nature" approach to representation. Always a prolific draftsman, Richards here delineated the forms of various plants and wild flowers with botanical exactitude. The artist's concern for realism based on careful observation was in keeping with the Ruskinian notion that God is manifest in the tiniest details of the natural world.

Ruskin's ideas influenced the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in England, as well as its American counterpart, the Association for the Advancement of Truth in Art, of which Richards was a member.

William Trost Richards

United States, 1833–1905

Niagra Falls, 1856

Graphite on cream, medium-weight, smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Lent by Mr. and Mrs. David Price, TL70.281.104

Alexander Robertson

United States (born Scotland), 1898–1936

From the Mill, 1796

Black ink on off-white, moderately thick, moderately textured laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Purchased with funds given by Mr. and Mrs. Leonard L. Milberg, 1990.216.2

In this drawing Alexander Robertson used a stylized graphic shorthand developed by his brother Archibald, who authored the first drawing manual published in the United States, *Elements of the Graphic Arts* (1802). The artist rendered leaves with looping strokes of his pen, created shading with parallel diagonal lines, and used lighter outlines for background motifs to indicate spatial distance. While the presence of a mill on the Hudson River suggests the beginning of industrial development, the drawing presents a harmonious vision of man in nature, with its tiny figure of a fisherman tucked among the rocks at the left.

Peter Frederick Rothermel

United States, 1817–1895

Sketchbook, 1857

Graphite with ink and watercolor on cream, medium-weight, slightly textured wove paper
Brooklyn Museum, Purchased with funds given by Mr. and Mrs. Leonard L. Milberg, 1997.129

This 42-page sketchbook contains drawings by the history painter Peter Frederick Rothermel of scenes in Genazzano, Italy, 40 miles east of Rome. He documented the local architecture, sculpture, landscape, and people, while also including sketches for narrative subjects. The costumes and daily life of the townfolk are captured in several skillful figure studies, including this image of a man leaning against a stone wall.

John Singer Sargent

United States (born Italy), 1856–1925

Sketchbook, 1871–72

Graphite, charcoal, watercolor and white chalk on paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Bronson Binger, 1996.231

Regarded as one of the leading portraitists and watercolorists of the Gilded Age, the expatriate John Singer Sargent was also a consummate draftsman. He drew prolifically and precociously from a young age, as evidenced by this sketchbook, which he used while traveling in Germany in 1871–72, at age fifteen. Sargent filled many of the pages with his exercises in copying classical statuary from the famous plaster cast collection of Dresden's Albertinum museum. The sketches show a variety of approaches, from broad, linear strokes to refined tonal modeling.

Aaron Draper Shattuck

United States, 1832–1928

Plants By a Stream, undated

Graphite on off-white, moderately thick, smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Emigh, 77.106

Everett Shinn

United States, 1876–1953

Frédérique Follows Her Husband, Illustration for “Frédérique,” 1906

Black crayon (probably Conté) on beige, medium-weight, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Dick S. Ramsay Fund, 42.101

This drawing is one of 16 by the artist commissioned to illustrate Charles Paul de Kock’s 1907 novel *Frédérique*, a tale of love and adultery in Parisian society. In this image, Frédérique, disguised in men’s clothing, pursues her husband on his evening outing to confirm his extramarital escapades. Everett Shinn juxtaposed a precise rendering of the protagonist in the foreground with loose, rapid strokes of crayon in the architecture and pavement to heighten the mystery and gloominess of this nighttime scene.

Raphael Soyer

United States (born Russia), 1899–1987

Two Dancers, 1935–40

Pastel on grey wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Museum Collection Fund, 40.85

Albert Sterner

United States, 1863–1946

Nude, 1916

Red and white chalk on off-white, moderately thick, moderately textured Japanese laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of the artist, 29.1030

Thomas Sully

United States, 1783–1872

Figure Studies, circa 1830s

Iron gall ink and watercolor on beige, medium-weight, moderately textured antique laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of the American Art Council, 1990.102.1a-b

Bradley Walker Tomlin

United States, 1899–1953

Back, circa 1925

Conté crayon and watercolor on medium, beige, moderately textured, laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Frank L. Babbott, 25.520

To render the three-dimensional volume of the female form, Bradley Walker Tomlin created delicate tonal modulations by dragging and rubbing a Conté crayon across the textured surface of the paper. Intersecting Cubist planes, lightly sketched on the figure's lower back, hint at an underlying abstract structure, while accents of watercolor around the figure add a decorative touch. Best known for his mature Abstract Expressionist paintings, Tomlin destroyed much of his early work, of which *Back* is a rare surviving example.

John Henry Twachtman

United States, 1853–1902

Three Trees, circa 1888–95

Pastel on gray-brown, moderately thick, moderately textured wove paper with black, blue, and red threads

Brooklyn Museum, Museum Surplus Fund, 25.416

Elihu Vedder

United States, 1836–1923

Bound Angel, 1891

White chalk and black Conté crayon on bluish-green, moderately thick, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Bequest of William H. Herriman, 21.482

This highly finished preparatory study for a painting depicts a personification of the human soul in conflict as a female angel with bound hands and feet. Although Elihu Vedder rendered the figure's idealized body as fettered and immobile, he suggested an active spiritual life through her attitude of contemplation, with head tilted back, eyes closed, and brow slightly furrowed.

Bound Angel exemplifies Vedder's technical prowess as a draftsman, as well as his esoteric Symbolist subject matter. Symbolism emerged in turn-of-the-century literary and artistic circles as a movement that favored the exploration of emotional, spiritual, and imaginative themes over the representation of the real world (see also Kahlil Gibran's drawing displayed nearby).

Elihu Vedder

United States, 1836–1923

Study for “Prayer for Death in the Desert,” circa 1867

Charcoal, white chalk, pastel, and black crayon on gray-green, moderately thick, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur L. Ross, Jr., L81.62

Abraham Walkowitz

United States (born Siberia), 1880–1965

Dancing Figures (Isadora Duncan), undated

Black ink and graphite on cream, medium-weight, moderately textured paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of the artist, 39.473a–c

Mounted in this order by Abraham Walkowitz, this series of three drawings evokes the expressive choreography of the famous modernist dancer Isadora Duncan. The artist adopted an abstracted, linear approach to the body to capture the essence of Duncan’s dynamic movements and swirling drapery. After first seeing her perform in Paris in 1907, the enthralled Walkowitz produced thousands of drawings of the dancer. He viewed her rejection of academic standards in dance as analogous to his own artistic evolution.

Abraham Walkowitz

United States (born Siberia), 1880–1965

Abstraction, 1912

Graphite on medium, cream, moderately textured, laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of the artist, 39.655

Abstraction evokes the entangled forms of two figures in an embrace using a Cubist language of faceted geometric shapes and patterned hatchings. Abraham Walkowitz probably took his inspiration from a drawing by Pablo Picasso that was exhibited at Alfred Stieglitz's progressive 291 gallery in New York. Like many modernists, Walkowitz used the human figure as a vehicle for aesthetic experimentation.

Abraham Walkowitz

United States (born Siberia), 1880–1965

Improvisations of New York, 1914

Ink on cream, thin, smooth wove paper mounted to paper

Brooklyn Museum, Bequest of Mrs. Carl L. Selden, 1996.157.31

Executed at a time when Abraham Walkowitz was experimenting with modernist abstraction, *Improvisations of New York* captures the frenetic energy of the city through the dynamic handling of the ink. Angled and squiggled lines evoke the vertical thrust of skyscrapers soaring above the crowded street, suggested by a denser concentration of strokes at the bottom of the composition.

Max Weber

United States (born Russia), 1881–1961

Composition with Four Figures, 1910

Charcoal and pastel on moderately thick, moderately textured laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Dick S. Ramsay Fund, 57.17

One of the first American artists to embrace modernist innovations in European art, Max Weber created this drawing after a sojourn in Paris from 1905 to 1908. The blocky forms, faceted planes, and masklike faces of his figures show the influence of the early Cubism of Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, both of whom Weber met in Paris. In *Standing Figure*, on display nearby, he adopted a more linear and reductive approach to the body.

Max Weber

United States (born Russia), 1881–1961

Standing Figure, 1911

Blue-gray ink on tan, moderately thick, smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of the artist, 57.28

Max Weber

United States (born Russia), 1881–1961

The Dancer, 1946

Pastel on brown, moderately thick, rough-textured laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift from collection Hannelore B. Schulhof, New York, 87.46.1

Benjamin West

United States, 1738–1820

Know Thy Self, 1768

Iron gall ink and washes and oil impasto and washes on ivory, moderately thick, moderately textured laid paper

Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn Museum Collection, X1042.40

Most likely a preliminary study for a never-realized history painting, Benjamin West's wash drawing presents an allegorical vision of London's Royal Academy of Arts, a professional artists' organization founded in 1768, as a gathering of learned men from different epochs. Some figures wear classical togas, while others don contemporary wigs and robes. Additional references to enlightenment—including the bright spotlight in the composition's center and the bust of Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, in the background—symbolize the noble endeavors of the institution and its commitment to the classical tradition.

Marguerite Thompson Zorach

United States, 1887–1968

Marianne Moore, circa 1925

Charcoal on beige colored, medium weight, smooth, wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Tessim Zorach, 80.87

The modernist poet Marianne Moore is readily recognizable here by her slender face and neck, her elongated fingers, and her signature mannish dress. Notwithstanding the reductive and linear approach to form, this portrait crackles with personality, conveyed through the artist's use of expressive lines and physical distortions, particularly in the hands.

Marguerite Zorach and Moore were both involved in New York City's vanguard cultural circles and admired each other's works. Zorach's richly colored paintings and embroideries inspired Moore's poem "In the Days of Prismatic Color" (1923).

William Zorach

United States (born Lithuania), 1887–1966

Seated Nude, 1930

Graphite on beige, medium-weight, moderately textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of the collection of the Zorach children, 84.45.2

William Zorach

United States (born Lithuania), 1887–1966

Dahlov Reading, circa 1930

Graphite on cream, thin, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of William Bloom, 84.46.21

William Zorach

United States (born Lithuania), 1887–1966

Profile of a Woman's Head, undated

Graphite on cream, medium-weight smooth wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift from the collection of Estelle and Jay Sam Unger, 1996.161.3

Like many modernists, William Zorach embraced a reductive approach to representation, distilling a motif to its essential forms and eliminating unnecessary details. In portraiture, this approach emphasizes the most distinctive aspects of a sitter's appearance but also reduces the amount of available visual information. This drawing wavers between these competing effects of individualization and generalization. Using assured strokes of the pencil, Zorach delineated the head in a single-line contour—a style that he adopted in the late 1910s and one that emphasizes the two-dimensionality of the image and the picture plane.

William Zorach

United States (born Lithuania), 1887–1966

Three Figures Under a Tree, 1917

Graphite on beige, medium-weight, slightly textured wove paper

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of William Bloom, 84.46.8

In this drawing William Zorach abstracted the forms of a large tree and three nude figures into schematized shapes outlined with borders of parallel hatchings. The uniform treatment of humans and landscape points to the harmonious relationship he felt with nature on his annual summer retreats into the countryside. As he recalled of these idylls, “There were no problems ... no gloomy forebodings, no literary solving of the world’s ills, only a joyous awareness of the world about us.” In addition, this drawing presents a modernist take on the traditional theme of bathers in the landscape.

For this special exhibition, feel free to examine the works more closely and thank you for returning the magnifying glass when you are done.