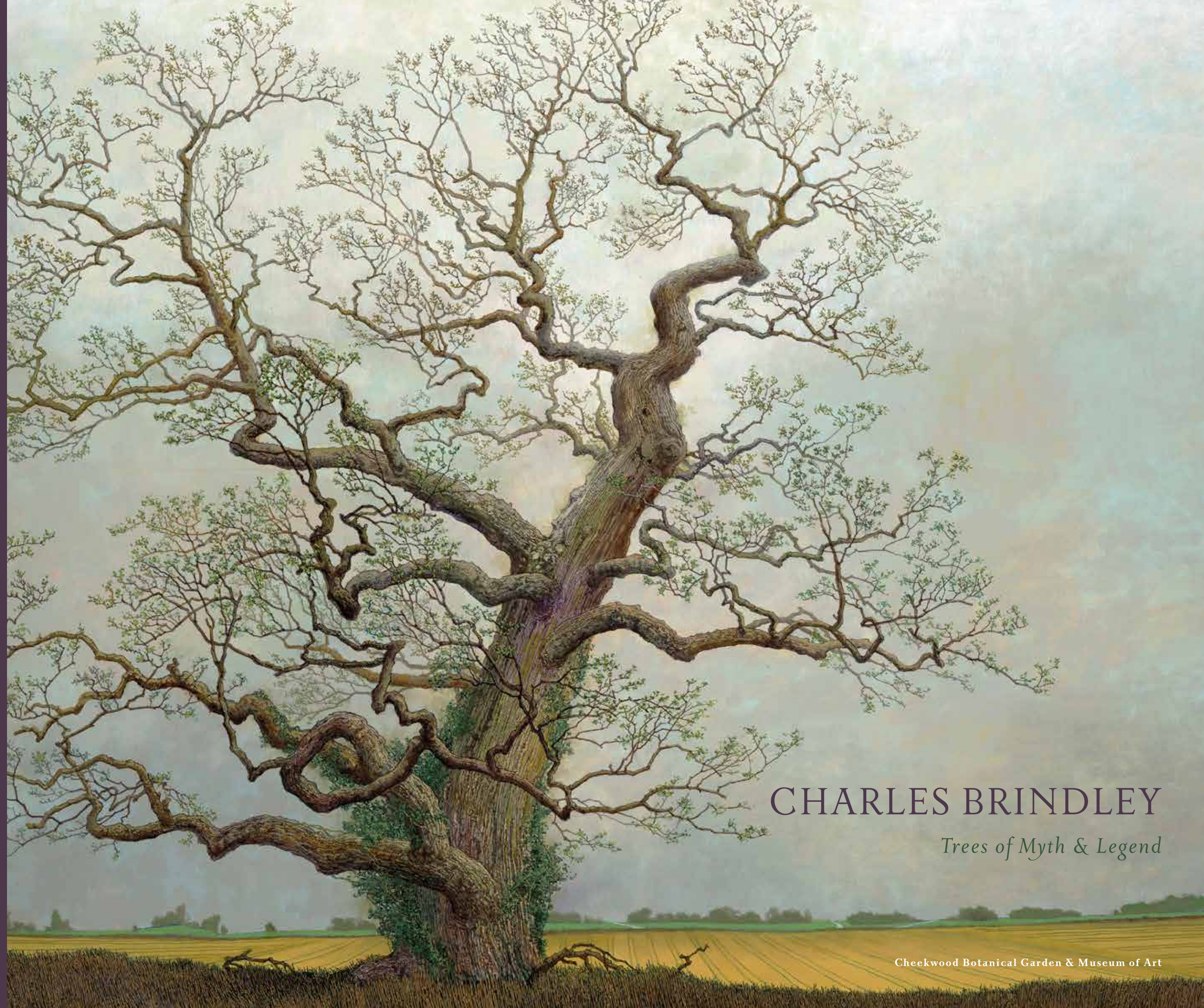




Charles Brindley lives and works out of several old Victorian structures in Adairville, a small community 35 miles north of Nashville, Tennessee. He has been represented by galleries in numerous cities, including Nashville, Memphis, Taos, Washington, DC and New York City. His work appears in public and corporate collections throughout the United States and in private collections internationally. Five touring exhibitions of Brindley's works have travelled to museums and art centers in the Southeast and Midwest. There have been two major retrospectives of the artist's career. The Tennessee State Museum presented *Landscape Vision: Works of Charles Brindley* and the Evansville Museum organized *Trace and Transformation*, an exhibit of his work spanning twenty years. *Far Hills, Images of the Tennessee Residence*, an exhibit of commissioned drawings and paintings of the historic mansion of Tennessee's Governors, completed a schedule of eight venues throughout the state.

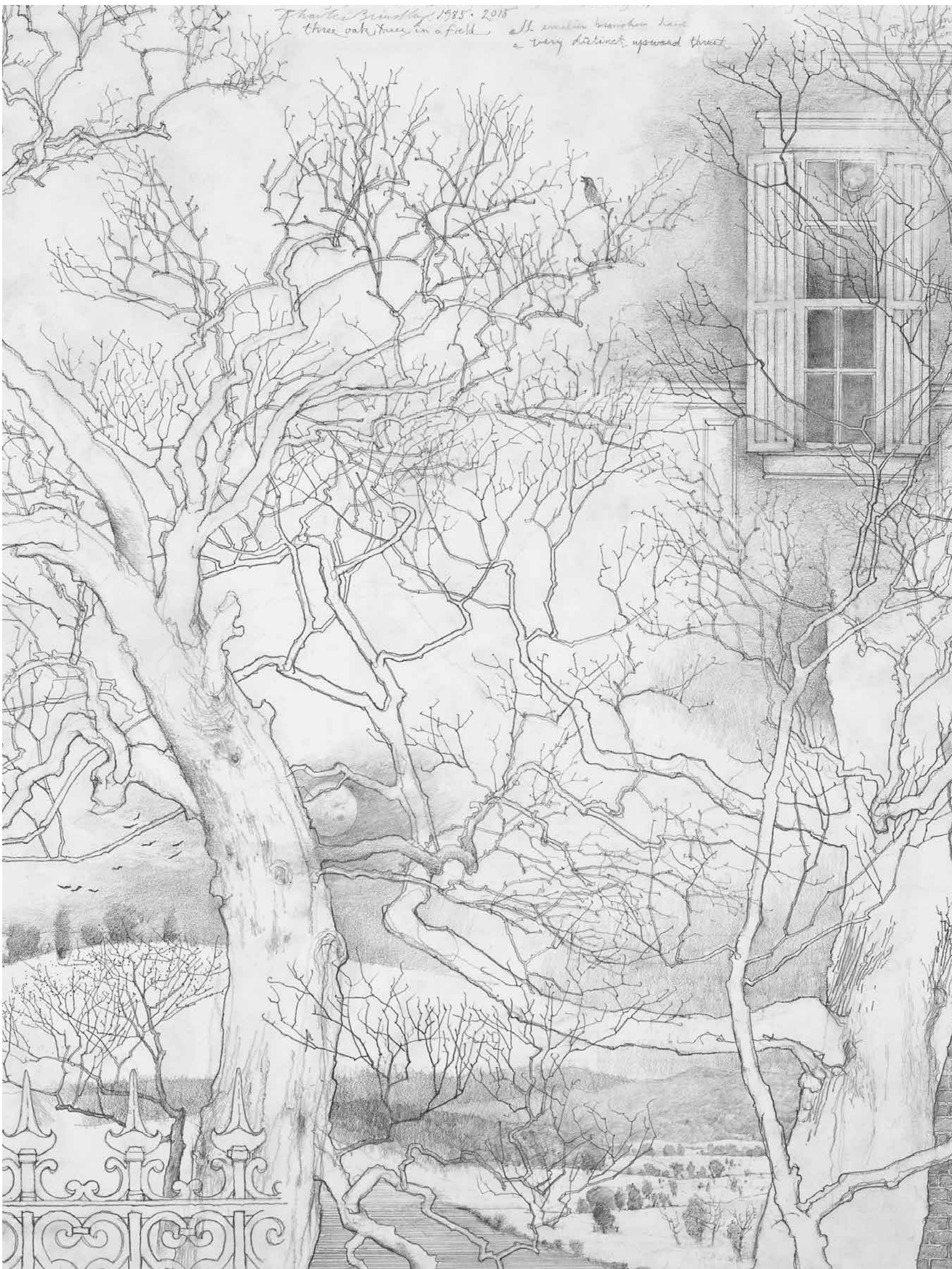
Charles Brindley's drawings and paintings depict a variety of symbol-laden subjects, including giant deciduous trees, panoramic landscapes, prehistoric ruins, rock formations, architecture and still lifes. His images are highly representational but contain multi-layered abstract elements.



# CHARLES BRINDLEY

*Trees of Myth & Legend*

Charles Brindley 1985-2015  
Three oak trees in a field all smaller branches have  
a very distinct upward thrust



**CHARLES BRINDLEY**  
*Trees of Myth & Legend*

Cheekwood Botanical Garden & Museum of Art



Cheekwood is a 55-acre botanical garden and art museum located on the historic Cheek estate, one of the finest examples of an American Country Place Era estate in the United States. Our mission is to preserve Cheekwood as an historical landmark where beauty and excellence in art and horticulture stimulate the mind and nurture the spirit.

Published by Cheekwood Botanical Garden & Museum of Art to accompany *Charles Brindley: Trees of Myth & Legend*  
February 4 - April 19, 2015

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ISBN: 978-0-692-36650-9

Catalogue design and production by Becky Brawner  
Printed in the USA by Douglas Printing, Nashville, TN

Essay by Robert McGrath, Professor Emeritus, Dartmouth College

Front and back covers and title page:  
*Ancient Red Oak on Edge of an Agricultural Landscape*,  
2008, oil on canvas, 30 x 40 inches

Inside front and back covers:  
Detail of *Fragments of the Seen and of the Unseen*,  
1985-2015, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches

EXHIBITION  
PRESENTED BY



A CELEBRATION OF TREES  
PRESENTED BY



EXHIBITION  
SUPPORTED BY



## INTRODUCTION

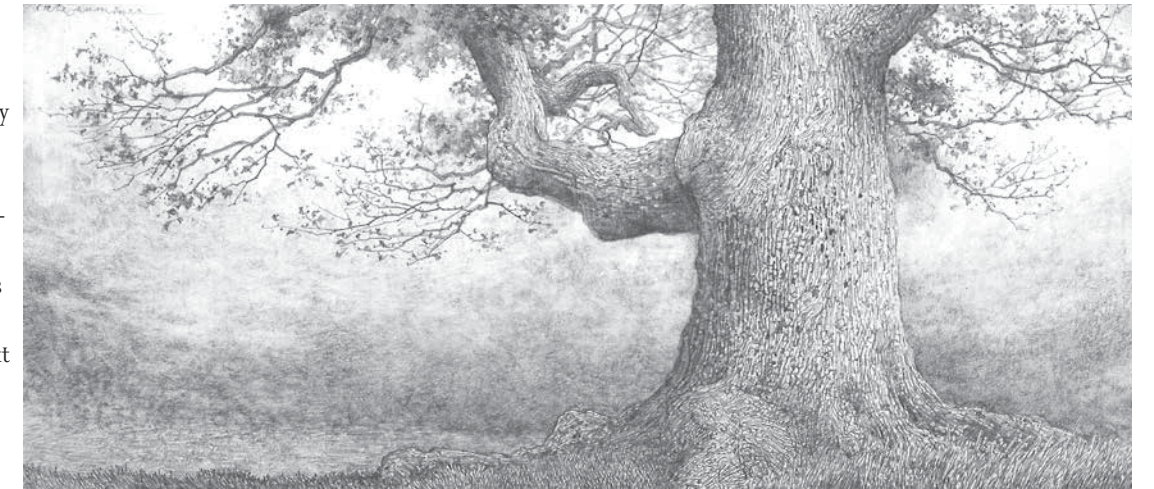
### *Charles Brindley's Trees of Myth & Legend*

Nature has always been touted as one of the principal attractions of Tennessee. We typically experience it while traveling. The signs announcing state parks or the billboards advertising "See Rock City" – driving on the interstate, we are always reassured that nature is just around the corner, that the next view point is waiting for us. An entire road, the Natchez Trace Parkway, was designed to allow motorists to experience nature by driving. Occasionally, we stop at a rest area to admire the hills and vistas of Middle Tennessee, we take a snapshot, and then we drive on.

In Charles Brindley's landscape drawings and paintings, we encounter a side of nature that exists far apart from the postcard perfect sights. The trees, rocks, and human made structures that fill the canvases of Charles Brindley come from the same landscape but seem to exist elsewhere. They are located outside the temporal framework that guides our experiences, and they also seem to exist in a different space. Revealed in Brindley's titles is a nomenclature that describes most frequently the tree species – beech, oak, maple, the specific location, or the historic background. But these markers of a specific time or location are misleading, since these trees, these buildings are the gateways into a world of enchantment. These are trees that, for the artist and anyone who cares to listen, speak of myth and legend.

The veneration of trees is an age old human desire for spiritual connectedness that is pagan in origin. As the art historian Robert McGrath describes it in the following essay, Brindley's affinity for trees and rock formations can be compared to a spiritual seeker like a shaman, or a druid, only that Brindley approaches the landscape with the sober knowledge that the ecological systems that provide sustenance for trees are fragile. Not only are the species that live in the landscape endangered but so is the landscape itself, and so are the man-made structures. This is where the German romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich, discussed in McGrath's essay, turns out to be an "ancestor" for Brindley. Just as the dark forests in Friedrich's haunting paintings are a life force, a resource of spiritual renewal, so are Brindley's trees a symbol of endurance. Fragility and endurance are the seemingly irreconcilable polarities that meet in Brindley's art. It is that tension that mesmerizes and holds us in awe.

Charles Brindley returns to Cheekwood after two earlier exhibitions in 1982 and in 1996. *Trees of Myth and Legend* is the largest exhibition of his work since the artist had a retrospective at the Tennessee State Museum in 1998. The new Cheekwood exhibition is a survey of his paintings and drawings from the last three decades with a special emphasis on trees. In 2015, the exhibition anchors Cheekwood's "Celebration of Trees," a series of education and public programs that coincide with Tennessee Arbor Day, National



*Study of Swan Lawn Chinquapin Oak at Cheekwood*, 2014-15, graphite on paper, 7.5 x 17.5 inches

Arbor Day and the Jewish holiday Tu B'Shevat. There are several works in the exhibition that Brindley started in the 1980s and only just recently finished. Specifically for the exhibition, Brindley has completed a new series of drawings of the venerable chinkapin oak tree at the end of the Swan Lawn. For the first time, all the drawings of Cheekwood's mansion that Brindley made between 1999 and 2000 will be exhibited together in one room.

No doubt, Cheekwood's historic landscape and arboretum are a great resource for artists many of whom paint here en plein air. Charles Brindley has sustained an interest in Cheekwood's iconic views such as the oak, Wisteria Arbor, and the front façade, that is exceptional and marked by a deeper sense of place. There is not a better artist Cheekwood could have chosen to help celebrate trees.

While celebrating the paintings and drawings of one artist, the exhibition is at the same time a collective effort. Robert McGrath generously allowed us to print parts of a longer essay that he wrote on Charles Brindley. We are indebted to many individuals and institutions, including the artist himself, who agreed to lend to the exhibition. All are listed at the back of this publication. Thanks to Cheekwood staff who dedicated many hours to the details of planning, including Jane MacLeod, President & CEO, Kristin Paine, Deputy Director of External Affairs, Lauren Smith Hong, Development Associate, Claire Brick Corby, VP of Marketing, Patrick Larkin, Senior VP of Gardens & Facilities, Hillary Steinwinder, VP for Public Programs, Karen Kwarciak, School and Outreach Coordinator, Jane Coleman Harbison, Registrar, Brian Downey, Exhibition Designer and Assistant Curator, and John Nelson, Art Handler. Very special acknowledgment goes to Charles Brindley who graciously agreed to this exhibition while working on other projects, including Glen Leven Farm and Belmont Mansion, and took on the challenge of finishing new drawings of the chinkapin oak in time for the exhibition.

**Jochen Wierich, Ph.D.**  
Chief Curator

## The Shamanic Art of Charles Brindley & the Reenchantment of and by the Natural World

Essay by Robert McGrath



*The Angel Oak*, 2012, oil on canvas, 24 x 36 inches

### CHAPTER ONE: TREES

*“The wonder is that we can see these trees and not wonder more.”*

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature* (1836)

The art of Charles Brindley is at once consolingly old and confoundingly new. Old in its devotion to old master technique and its longing for a pre-industrial Eden, a Southern agrarian Arcadia where the sun always shines and magnolias blossom at every door; new in its conscious levels of abstraction and neo-modernist facture. Brindley deliberately invites the viewer to associate his draftsmanship and subjects with canonized traditions, yet upon close inspection his painted canvases materialize a distinct penchant for formal abstraction and engagement with the pictorial surface, the quintessence of the high modernist project. Brindley’s art, however, cannot be reduced to a simple dichotomy. He is, by any measure, one of the most complex and interesting artists in today’s American South.

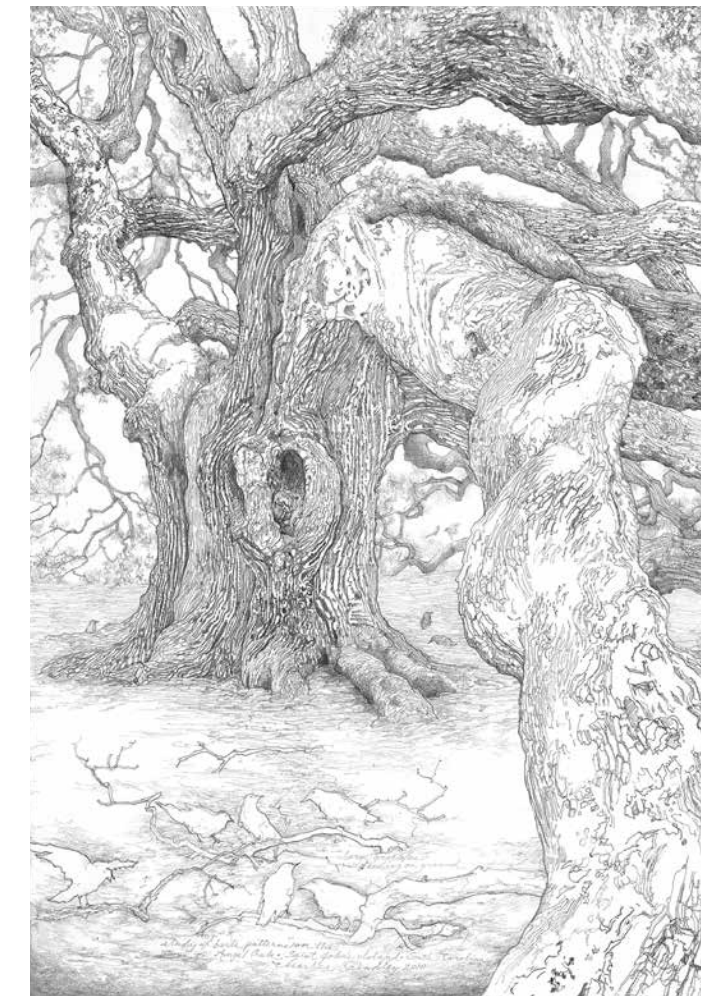
Many historians of art have argued that landscape painting is dead, its best work belonging to the 19th and early 20th centuries. Andy Warhol and his ilk have also stated that beauty is defunct, an archaic legacy from the cultural past. According to these accounts, an artist like Brindley is either anachronistic or irrelevant. Such,

however, is far from the case. For in his challenging and overtly beautiful oeuvre Brindley draws attention to issues vital to our time: the need to reenchant the natural world (or, conversely, from a shamanic perspective to be reenacted by the natural world), to view it not as resource but as a site for redemption and salvation. Brindley is at once ecologist, historian and shaman. As the art critic Suzi Gablik reminds us: “The shaman hears the voices in the trees and rocks, the voices of things unheard to us all.”<sup>1</sup> To the extent that the hero was the chief protagonist of modernity, the shaman may lead the way into postmodernity. If humanity is to avoid an irreversible ecological crisis, it will need to reestablish its relationship to the natural world and to retrieve a sense of the beautiful in nature. With reverence towards the depicted object, artists like Charles Brindley strive to reveal the fundamental truths for our times. Often presentational rather than representational, his compelling work, and art like it, may save us yet from our worst instincts with regard to the total depredation of the planet.

During the early 1970s a group of artists arose under the broad rubric of “new realism” to challenge the near hegemony of abstract painting which had dominated the post war years. Among the leading “new realists” were such still life and landscape painters as Janet Fish, and Sylvia Mangold and the photorealists Robert Cottingham and Don Eddy. The common thread uniting these diverse artists was a commitment to the grafting of the old onto

the new, or, as critic Cindy Nemses defined it: a dedication to the “lessons of art history with an allegiance to modernist principles.”<sup>2</sup> This wide definition of “new realism” fits Charles Brindley to perfection; his work is at once old and new, acknowledging the past while exploring new issues about the active tension between surface design and narrative cogency. While his paintings invite a reading according to the conventions of narrative realism, Brindley often proceeds to undermine it by not providing a definitive meaning.

For starters, let us investigate one his greatest signature images, a painting of South Carolina’s *Angel Oak*, the largest tree East of the Mississippi River and possibly the oldest living thing in the United States.<sup>3</sup> Created in the tranquility of the studio and based on numerous sketches made *en plein air* and on site, the canvas affords multiple opportunities to interrogate Brindley’s working methods. Despite its apparent verisimilitude – the impulse to replicate exactly and in great detail what appears to the painter’s eye – the painting is a heavily edited version of the artist’s originary experience. It is, in the broadest sense, an invented reality. Absent from both the canvas and the drawing upon which it is based are the several wooden struts and metal guy wires that today hold the behemoth together and prevent the branches from collapsing under their own weight. Nothing: fences, roads, a parking lot is permitted to intrude upon this idyllic, sanitized image of an ancient (estimates range from 500 to 1500 years old) tree.<sup>4</sup> What is evoked is a consciousness of the past in the present, “a backward glance” at an ageless symbol of the Old South. Festooned with moss and compressed into the visual field of the painting, the *Angel Oak* is an arch-Druid’s dream of the sacred. Long-lived and eternally green, (*Quercus virginiana*), the live oak is



*Study of the Angel Oak*, 2010, graphite on paper, 16.5 x 11.5 inches

the southern tree par excellence. Also the favored tree of Zeus, the oak symbolizes strength, longevity and the sacred grove. In Brindley’s aesthetic canon, age and beauty are inseparable handmaidens, the former eliciting the latter.

Emblematic of the city of Charleston, South Carolina, the consecrated bastion of the Confederacy, the *Angel Oak* is a product of that “enigmatic” or “metaphysical naturalism” that informs all of the art of Charles Brindley. Superficially without plot or purpose other than to enchant the viewer’s eye with arabesques of leaf and limb, the *Angel Oak* is, au fond, a cultural deposit of profound richness and meaning. It describes at once a landscape of longing, of history and usage, and a rich spiritual icon, “a search for the sacred in a modern, secular world” to cite the art historian Robert Rosenblum.<sup>5</sup>

One of the many questions that arise with regard to Brindley’s art is the extent to which it can even be defined as landscape. In *Angel Oak*, both the drawing and the resultant painting, there are none of the conventional elements of a “view.” A 65-foot giant tree has been reduced to a 3-foot high canvas and only the outermost branches of the tree extend beyond the frame. For the observer, there is almost no foreground purchase, the customary repoussoir device by which one typically enters a painted vista. Of vista there is even less; there exists no movement into depth by way of enframing coulisses or other conventions for spatial recession. In fact, we are compelled to ask if this is really a landscape at all but rather a charged portrait of place? Humanity is before rather than within the natural world – there are no staffage figures as providers of scale and surrogates for the spectator – and the delimited space is less a ground for action than for contemplation. In short, humans are outsiders and the role of spectatorship is established by the originary angle of vision of the artist that the viewer is impelled, indeed required, to assume. Nature, here devoid of overt human intervention, is the sole protagonist, a consecrated object of wonder and desire. As the Swiss-German writer Hermann Hesse wisely observed: “Trees are sanctuaries. Whoever knows how to listen to them experiences the truth.”<sup>6</sup> Lacking any of the conventional structural clichés of landscape painting, Brindley’s views of nature are, at the most fundamental level, cultural history disguised as scenery.

Viewed through the shamanic lens, the role of the artist is to evoke the pre-cultural memory of landscape. Only then, according to this view, can we find our way, before all formal religion, into the sacred aspects of nature and treat it with appropriate reverence. From this perspective, landscape is more subject than object, possessing agency and the capacity to speak directly to the artist and thereby inducing inspiration. Given that Brindley spends countless hours interrogating trees, there is much validity to this view of the subject/object dyad.

In *Angel Oak* Brindley valorizes a landscape that has not always been well served by American artists, the South.

Can, we might ask, Brindley be made to play the role of a spokesman for the South and its diverse regionalist agenda? Though he makes no claim to being a “Southern artist,” Brindley is clearly involved in an unconscious engagement with the complex burdens of southern history. In his work we discern, despite all disclaimers, the narrative voice of a southerner. A native son, Brindley was born raised and educated in Middle Tennessee. To this day he lives in Adairville, Kentucky, a small hamlet 35 miles north of Nashville. His training was through classes at the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts in the Great Smoky Mountains at Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

In his indispensable, yet controversial study of southern identity *The Mind of the South*, published in 1941, Wilbur J. Cash wrote: “The South, one might say, is a tree with many age rings, with its limbs and trunk bent and twisted by all the winds of the years but with its tap root in the Old South.”<sup>7</sup> That Brindley’s art resonates empathically with Cash’s arboreal metaphor is undeniable. His art, what biologist Edward O. Wilson would define as “bioregionalism,” is an art that is native to its place, articulating humanity’s innate affinity with nature and love of living things.<sup>8</sup>

Apart from painting in no region other than the South, Brindley clearly shares a common sensibility with a host of retrospective southern writers from William Faulkner to Eudora Welty. Brindley’s art, like so much of southern prose, is not so much about the world as attitudes toward it. To cite Cash once again: “The Southerner is a direct product of the soil. So far from being modernized in many ways it (the South) has actually always marched away, as to this day it continues to do, from the present towards the past.” So too does Brindley find the distant past visible in the landscape. His world is anything but the urban “New South.” Trees, rocks, ruins and Indian mounds are all repositories of cultural memory for Brindley whose work invariably evokes nostalgia for ages remote in time, along with wonder at their survival in the present.

In the introduction to *I’ll Take My Stand* (1930), the essential Agrarian manifesto of southern identity, the editor Donald Davidson wrote: “The theory of agrarianism is that the culture of the soil is the best and most sensitive of the vocations.” So too does Brindley ground his oeuvre in the “culture of the soil.” His is a landscape of longing, the seeing of ordinary things in extraordinary ways. As such, visible objects are construed to express invisible meanings. This capacity to transform elements of the mundane into the magical makes it difficult to determine where reality ends and the supernatural begins. Moralizing, as well as historical, his landscapes call for a deep engagement with the viewer.

How does Brindley achieve these magic realist effects? The drawings, completed works of art unto themselves, are made in the presence of raw nature. Graphite striations, parallel or horizontal to one another, describe with penetrating accuracy the visible appearance of a form. The artist’s working hand is everywhere visible in his graphic marks. Soft pencil is used to create atmosphere while harder pencils are employed to designate forms and details. “Hard over soft” is the process of delineation described by the artist. Careful notations are also made verbally in the margins of the drawing with respect to time of day, weather conditions, and quality of light.

These developed studies are, arguably, Brindley’s most brilliant exertions. They have no rivals in the history of western art save the sketches of a handful of Hudson River School artists and such European masters as Jacob van Ruisdael and the German Romantic Caspar David Friedrich, all palpable influences upon Brindley. In the final analysis, Brindley’s drawings – works of unprecedented scrutiny involving hundred of hours each – are more finished products, works of deliberate observation and completion, than the sketches of any prior European or American old master. They remain, uniquely, finished works of art rather than mere studies for oil paintings, which they also happen to be.

Turning to the paintings, which derive via the studio from the exacting drawings, there is less immediacy but there are present the satisfactions afforded by color and texture. Brindley’s paintings, unlike the drawings, are composed of myriad dots of color deployed

in a manner that is somewhat akin to the technique of mosaic. The resultant image provides a scintillating surface of contrasting hues and texture that resolves towards surface ornament and modernist figure/ground engagement. The presence of this exaggerated clarity of color and flattened perspective is especially true for the rock paintings that, at times, approach levels of almost pure formal abstraction.



*The Green Man*, 2001, oil on canvas, 48 x 36 inches

Unlike most contemporary artists, Brindley employs a labor-intensive process of underpainting. Utilizing a spectrum of complementary hues – a practice that has its origins in the Italian Renaissance – Brindley underpaints his final image in such a way that the surface often reveals the multiple layers of pigment that lie beneath. A process of sanding and the use of numerous layers of translucent glazing achieve this richly patined surface. All in all, Brindley expends hundreds of hours to attain his engaging pictorial effects.

Given that the trees to which he is so clearly devoted are so large and therefore difficult to reduce to a smaller canvas, Brindley resorts to a number of unusual pictorial strategies in order to convey their amplitude. Among these is the use of synecdoche in which a part is made to stand for the whole. The base of tree trunks often fill the entire visual field of the composition, suggesting the enormity of the whole while simultaneously serving as a quasi-abstract form, a surface for formal innovation. As the sole protagonists of his narratives, these carefully observed landscape elements are nonetheless permeated with a mystical sense of the world. Transcendental Realism or Supernatural Naturalism are rubrics that equally define this uncanny aesthetic.

## CHAPTER TWO: ROCKS

*“Rock of Ages cleft for me  
Let me hide myself in Thee”*

18th century hymn

There is a transcendental aesthetic that also underlies Brindley’s numerous images of rock formations, often containing dark and shadowy recesses. There is a certain “pleasure in shadows” in these enigmatic images and once again Friedrich is the artistic figure that lurks behind them. Brindley’s painting of the *Entrance to the Bell Witch Cave* or the smaller *Mound Cistern* displays clear affinities with Friedrich’s *Hut in the Snow* (Berlin State Museums) of circa 1827. In both instances we are led to the threshold of an entrance into an earth mound. What lays within remains a shadowy mystery?

At one level these are deep pictorial recesses wherein one can see and not be seen and one’s back is protected from danger. Habitat theory, according to geographer Jay Appleton, best accounts for Brindley’s aesthetic conceit wherein prospect and refuge are demarked as the principle constituents of landscape experience. Art, in the words of Appleton, “is an acquired preference for particular methods of satisfying inborn desires. The two desires are for opportunity (prospect) and safety (refuge). Tracing these two desires gives us a means of understanding successful and enduring aesthetics.”<sup>10</sup>

Brindley’s rock formations, while often reminiscent of cromlechs or dolmens found, for example, in the art of Friedrich, are not intended as tombs. Rather they are often signifiers of passage from one realm to another, a form of “geomythology” or ritualized



*Mound Cistern at South Union*, 2011, graphite on paper, 12 x 9.5 inches

landscape that explores the darker recesses of the imagination.<sup>11</sup> Such works as *The Gateway* are suggestive of portals into the unknown and often confound the viewer with their radical juxtapositions of near and far. The level of abstraction in many of these paintings is so pronounced that if turned upside down the blue of the distant sky can easily be mistaken for water. Uniformly more successful than the drawings upon which they are notionally based, the rock paintings are among Brindley’s most original and engaging creations.

At the most fundamental level rocks are the most mythic substance in Brindley’s iconographical repertoire denoting bedrock beginnings and the basis of Christian belief. In another connection these strange and mysterious rock formations, with their dark and shadowy recesses, call to mind the literary devices of the Southern gothic novel. In the works of Faulkner, Welty and Flannery O’Conner – not to mention Harper Lee and Truman Capote – darkened recesses are major topoi of their work, denoting the mysterious and unknown. Once again Brindley, by virtue of the process of “unconscious engagement” finds himself deeply imbricated with Southern literary sensibilities.

## CHAPTER THREE: ARCHITECTURAL RUINS & RECENT ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES OF HISTORIC HOUSES

*“Drawing has always been at the core of my work.  
It provides a meditative refuge that affords me the  
opportunity to combine reference study and idea  
development.”*

Charles Brindley

Harmonizing within himself and within his art the animus and anima of Carl Jung’s analytical psychology, the work of Charles Brindley instantiates the two primary anthropomorphic archetypes of the unconscious mind. Elements of the theory of the collective unconscious, the animus and the anima activate that domain of the unconscious that transcends the personal psyche. Thus, it can be stated anew that the art of Charles Brindley almost reflexively instantiates southern values. To this end, Brindley has rendered the seemingly mute remains of ancient buildings resonantly articulate.

The broken remnants of brick homes and possibly factories, Brindley’s “ruins” are, at some level, the American equivalent of Caspar David Friedrich’s fragmentary gothic choirs (For example: *Abbey Amidst Oak Trees*, 1809-10, Berlin State Museums). While Friedrich’s gothic ruins denote the sundered religiosity of a much earlier age, Brindley’s brick walls, crumbling with age and succumbing to the forces of nature, suggest destruction by human agency. Are these the fragmentary remains of Civil War engagements? Are we meant to imagine these ruins as the product of Northern aggression? Or is this for Brindley just another useful signifier of the eternal struggle between nature and culture? As with the interpretation of his series of garden stakes, Brindley leaves it to the viewer to decide.

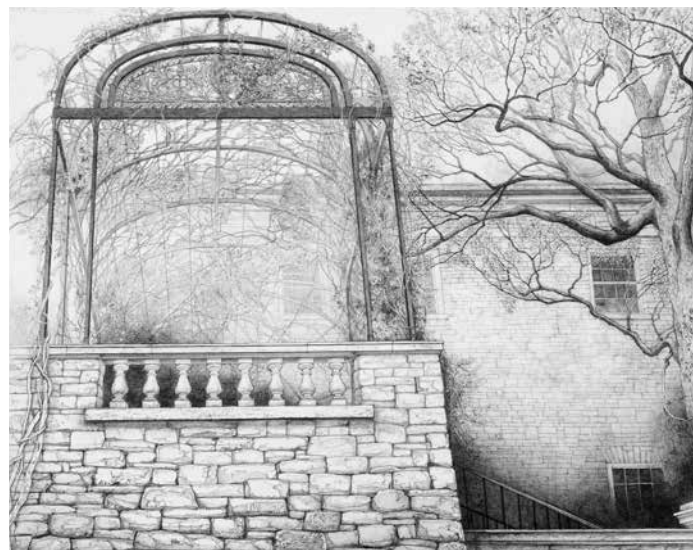
Where Friedrich positions his bare ruined choirs in the middle distance of his paintings, Brindley with a characteristic



*The Grand Staircase at the Tennessee Residence*, 2003, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches

move, foregrounds his brick walls close to and parallel with the picture plane. As such, they generally obscure the viewers' sense of space beyond the foreground, inhibiting any forceful movement into depth. For this reason Brindley's "ruins" appear more immediate than Friedrich's distant choirs.

More recently Brindley has undertaken a number of studies, both in graphite drawing and in paint, of several historic houses in Tennessee. These include intricate renderings of the Tennessee Residence in Nashville, the home of the state's governor. A 1929 neo-Georgian mansion, the Tennessee Residence has served as the governor's mansion since 1949 when it was acquired by the state. Brindley's renderings of the estate include both exterior and interi-



*View of Wisteria Arbour at Cheekwood*, 2000, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches

or views as well as images of the surrounding landscape. Executed with all of the precision of formal architectural rendering, the free-hand drawings are marvels of precision and artistic dexterity.

At present Brindley is engaged in a series of interpretative renderings of two ante-bellum mansions in Nashville. The youngest, the 1857 Glen Leven estate, was recently ceded to the Land Trust for Tennessee together with 65 acres surrounding the mansion. A two-storey brick residence, fronted by a colossal colonnade of white pillars, the mansion played a major role in the Civil War battle of Nashville, serving as a Union hospital during the hostilities. The more imposing Belmont Mansion was begun in 1853 in the Italian villa style and has served as a house museum in recent years. The largest house museum in Tennessee, Belmont served as a girl's school during the later 19th century before evolving into the current Belmont University. Once again the mansion figured in the battle of Nashville, serving as headquarters for the Union army. The current governing body is the Belmont Mansion Association.

In both instances of Brindley's artistic intervention, the love of old things, whether natural or man-made, has informed the exacting detail with which each architectural and non-architectural form is rendered. A custodian of southern culture, Brindley has, through his suggestive art, given voice to the most salient features of these otherwise mute historic antiquities.

Brindley has also undertaken a number of exquisite atmospheric drawings of the Cheekwood estate. These architectural details of the mansion's exterior architecture are emphatically planar, eschewing the more conventional three quarter view of architectural renderings found in magazines and brochures. Soft in focus and subtle in modeling, they record the surface details that are often lost in observation. For all their penetrating insight, these drawings render Cheekwood as a place of magic and mystery.

A shamanic voice for our time, Charles Brindley discourses with rocks and trees with uncommon sympathy – a shaman would say empathy – and understanding. His interrogation of their deeper meanings is a model of ecological concern and naturalist insight. His aged trees and lithic stones speak with a voice, prophetic at times, that demands of us the deepest regard for things older and more rooted to the earth than ourselves. Like the artist Charles Brindley we need to listen closely to the wise counsel of tongues in trees and sermons in stone, and act accordingly. Less the call of



*Doorway and Exterior Section of Cheekwood with Boxwood Paths*, 1999, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches

the wild than the allure of ancient and venerable things, Brindley's imaginary commands our most profound respect. It not only reveals our brightest and darkest history but, more importantly, the very survival of the planet depends upon our response to its deepest artistic imperatives.

Robert L. McGrath is Professor of Art History, Emeritus at Dartmouth College. A graduate of Princeton University, he has lectured and published widely on American art. Among his numerous publications are several books on landscape painting, including *Gods in Granite* (2001), *American Art and the 19th Century Conservation Movement* (2001), and *Mountains and Memory* (2012).

#### NOTES

- 1 Suzi Gablik, *The Reenchantment of Art* (New York, 2002) 45
- 2 Cindy Nemes, "Representational Painting in 1971: A New Synthesis," *Arts*, Dec. 1971, 46.
- 3 Naturally, the claim does not go uncontested. Wikipedia lists several bristlecone pines in California that dendrochronologists claim to be older by several thousand years.
- 4 Methusela, a bristlecone pine in California is said to be 4,800 years old.
- 5 Robert Rosenblum, *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko* (New York, 1975) 5.
- 6 Cited in Fred Hageneder, *The Heritage of Trees: History, Culture and Wisdom* (Trowbridge, U.K., 2001) 12.
- 7 Wilbur J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (New York, 1941) x.
- 8 For Wilson's "biophilia hypothesis" see his 1984 book *Biophilia* in which he argued that our affinity with nature is ingrained in our genotype.
- 9 Jap Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape* (London, 1975).
- 10 Appleton *op. cit.* 3
- 11 On the working of "geomythology" see John Michell, *At the Center of the World: Polar Symbolism Discovered in the Celtic, Norse and other Ritualized Landscapes*, London, 1994 passim.
- 12 Koerner, citing Carl Gustav Carus' biography of the artist, reports a similar episode with regard to a group of visitors to Friedrich's studio who upon viewing a canvas turned upside down upon an easel mistook sky for water. Koerner, *op. cit.*, 16.



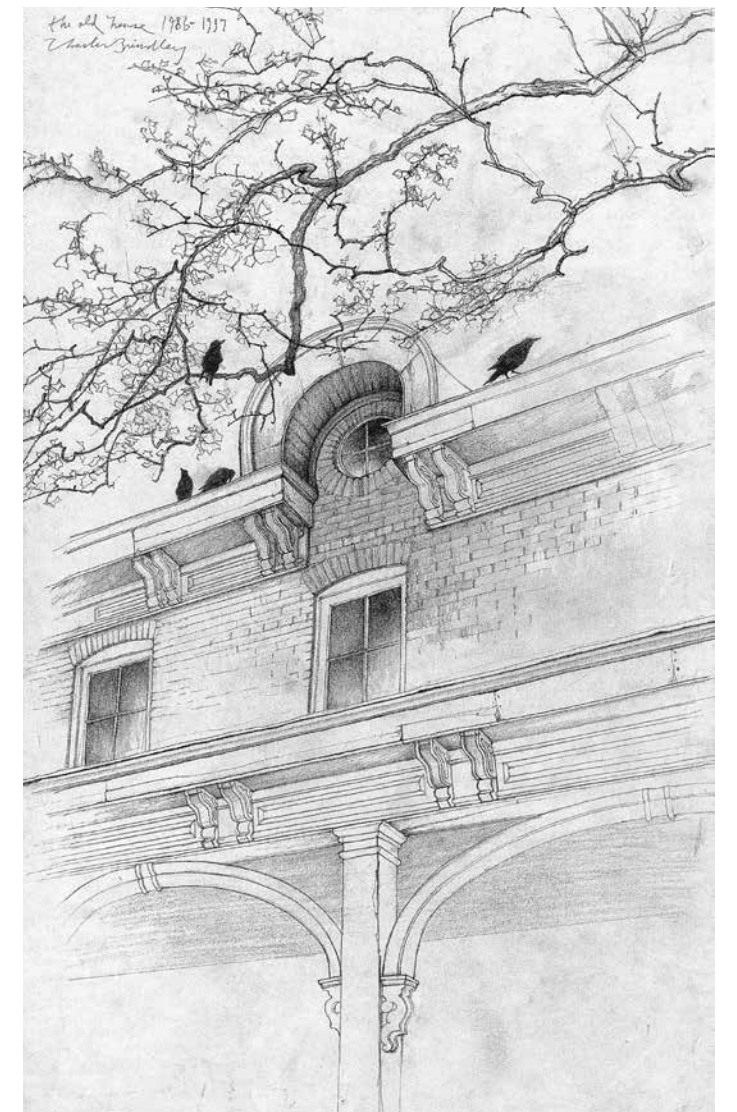
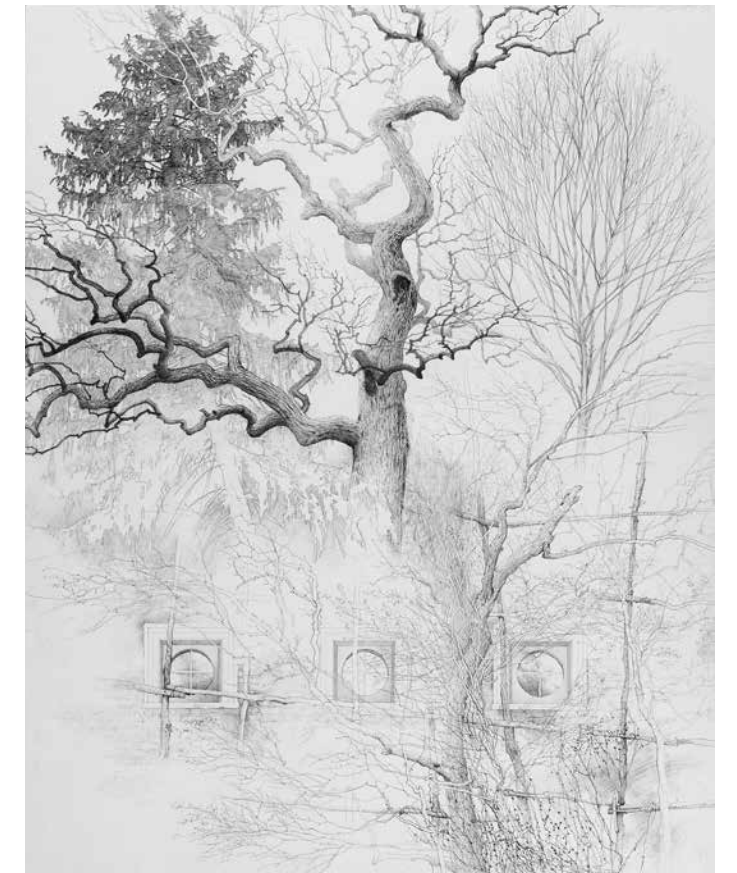
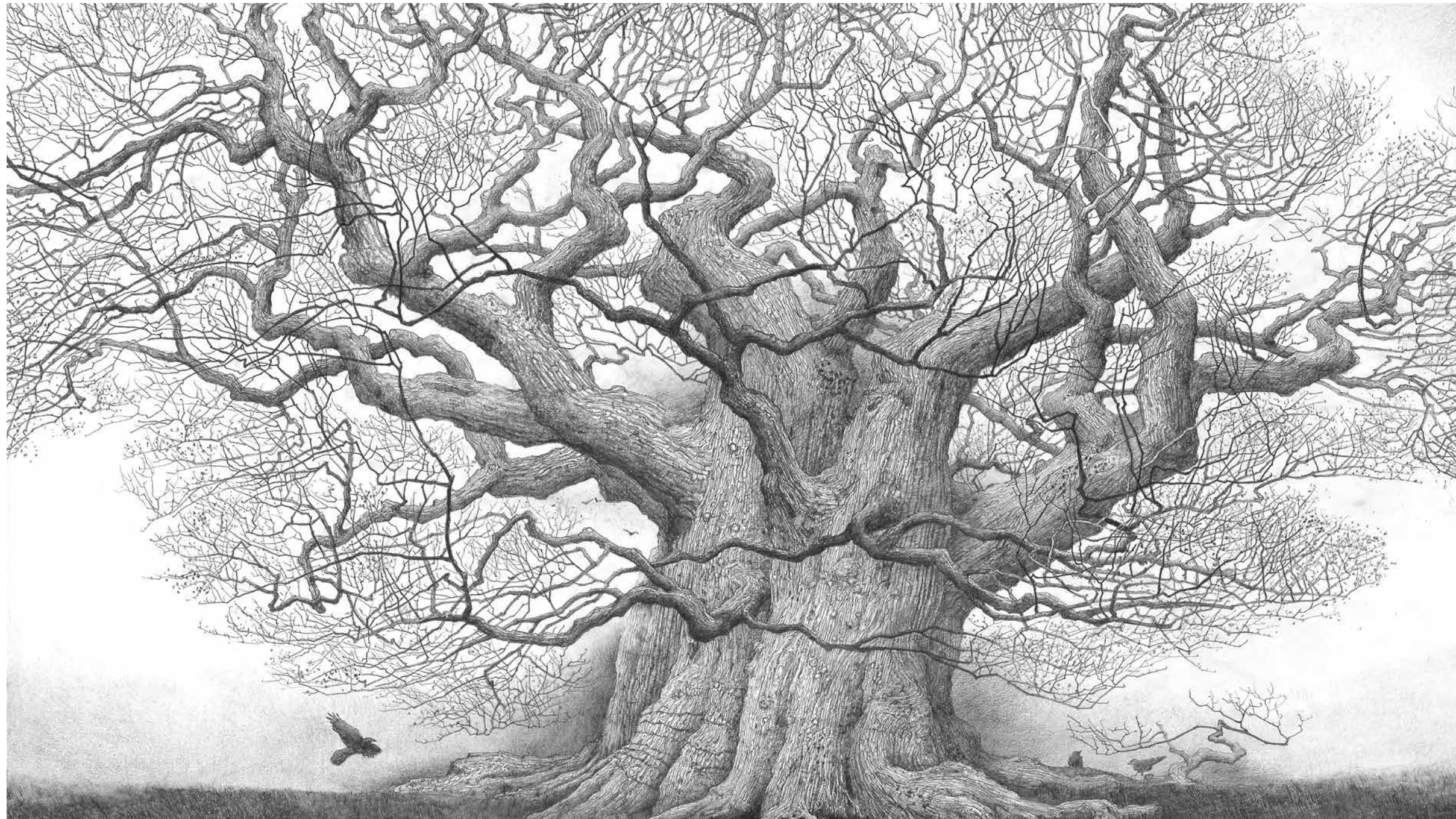
*North Wall at Glen Leven*, 2014, oil on canvas, 66 x 46 inches

SELECTED WORKS

Top right  
*A Severance of Crosses*,  
1988, graphite on paper,  
29 x 23 inches

Bottom right  
*The Old House*,  
1986-87, graphite on  
paper, 24.5 x 15 inches

*The Tree of Myth and Legend*, 2014-15, graphite on paper, 21 x 37 inches





*Landscape at New Market*, 2007, oil on canvas, 30 x 54 inches



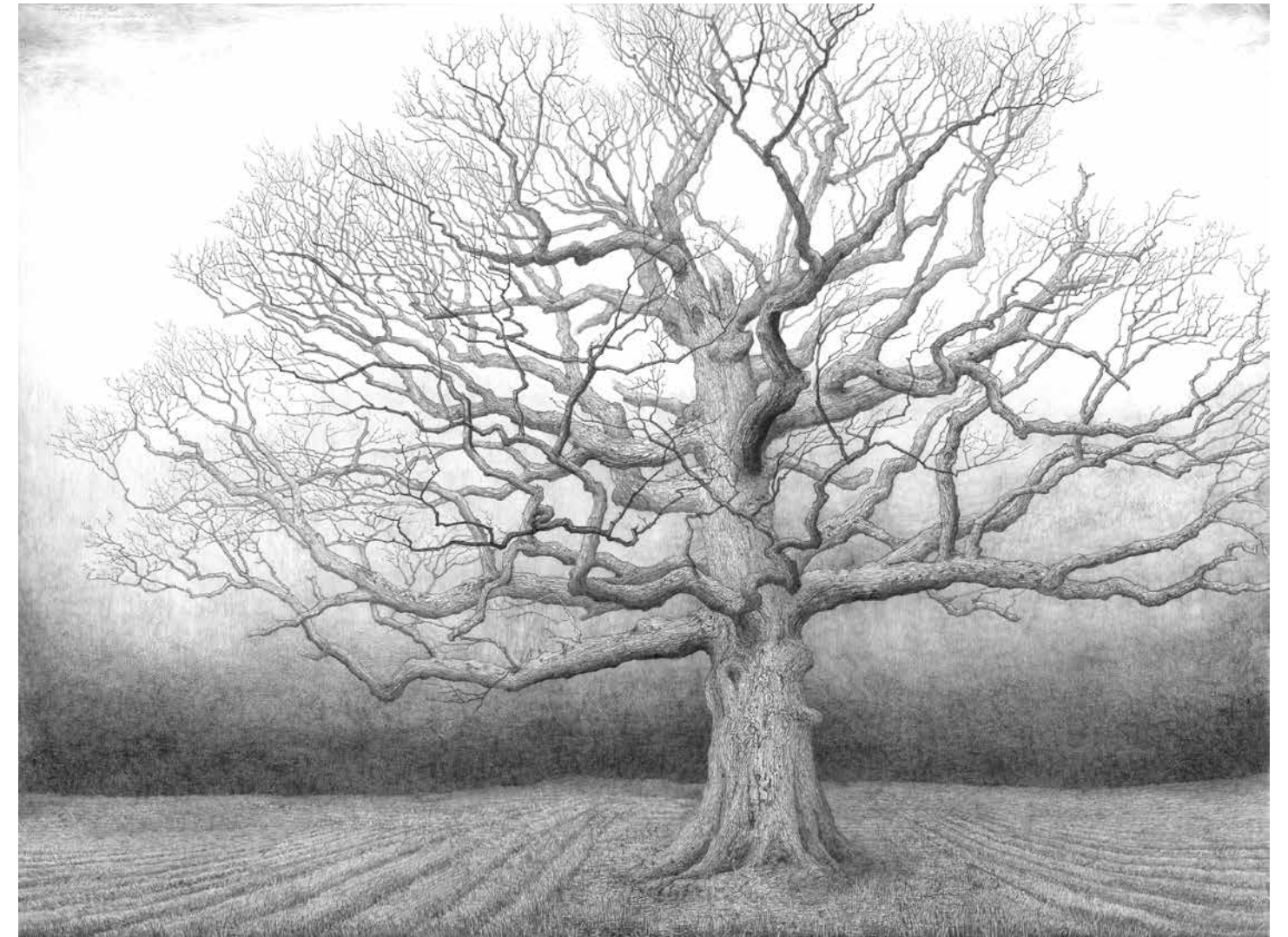
*The Gateway*, 2011, oil on canvas, 48 x 36 inches



Right  
*Giant Beech Tree in Winter*,  
2003, oil on canvas,  
58 x 40 inches



*The Battle of Nashville Monument*, 1999-2001, oil on canvas, 66 x 46 inches



*Ancient White Oak in Open Field*, 2011, graphite on paper, 30 x 40 inches



*Giant and Ancient Box Elder*, 2003, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches

## EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

### Drawings

**Study of Swan Lawn Chinquapin Oak at Cheekwood**, 2014-2015, graphite on paper, 23 x 28.5 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**Study of Swan Lawn Chinquapin Oak at Cheekwood**, 2014-2015, graphite on paper, 12 x 10.5 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**Study of Swan Lawn Chinquapin Oak at Cheekwood**, 2014-15, graphite on paper, 7.5 x 17.5 inches, collection of Charles Brindley, p. 3

**Study of Swan Lawn Chinquapin Oak at Cheekwood**, 2014-2015, graphite on paper, 12 x 10.5 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**The Tree of Myth and Legend**, 2014-15, graphite on paper, 21 x 37 inches, collection of Michelle Haynes, p. 10-11

**Old Southern Magnolia Tree at Glen Leven**, 2014, graphite on paper, 14.75 x 12.5 inches, collection of Debbie and Wylie McDougall

**The Bonaventure Oaks**, 2014, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches, collection of Mary Trabue Meyer

**View of an Old Cistern From an Upper Window**, 2014, graphite on paper, 8.5 x 8.5 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**An Especially Old and Large Ginkgo Tree at Glen Leven**, 2013, graphite on paper, 14.75 x 12.5", collection of Kate and Eric Satz

**Giant Ancient Chinquapin Oak**, 2013, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches, collection of Capell and Ellis Simmons

**Old Stone Springhouse at Glen Leven**, 2013, graphite on paper, 9 x 16 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**Old Sugar Maple Tree with Low Lying Limbs at Glen Leven**, 2013, graphite on paper, 14.75 x 12.5", collection of Kate and Eric Satz

**The Maples of Glen Leven**, 2013, graphite on board, 20 x 60 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**Ancient White Oak in Open Field**, 2011, graphite on paper, 30 x 40 inches, collection of Jennifer and Billy Frist, p. 15

**Mound Cistern at South Union**, 2011, graphite on paper, 12 x 9.5 inches, collection of Suzan and Jeff Vaughan, p. 7

**Study of the Angel Oak**, 2010, graphite on paper, 16.5 x 11.5 inches, collection of Charles Brindley, p. 5

**Study of the Angel Oak**, 2010, graphite on paper, 16.5 x 11.5 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**Study of Oak and Hickory Trees**, 2010, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches, collection of Wendy Thornton

**Study of Oak Tree**, 2010, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches, collection of Joan and Ben Rechter

**Two Maples and Tulip Poplar Tree**, 2010, graphite on paper, 24 x 31 inches, collection of Montgomery Bell Academy

**Giant Chestnut Oak Overlooking Ohio River**, 2008, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches, collection of Laurel Brown

**Ancient Giant Sycamore in Bottomland**, 2007, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches, collection of Pam Hoover

**Old Osage Tree - The Harbinger**, 2007, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches, collection of Will Cheek and Kathryn Barnett

**Old Southern Magnolia Tree at Traveller's Rest**, 2007, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**Sycamores at Warner Park**, 2006, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches, collection of Kathy and Tracy Shaw

**Giant and Ancient Box Elder**, 2003, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches, collection of Mary Howard Hayes, p. 15

**The Grand Staircase at the Tennessee Residence**, 2003, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches, private collection, p. 8

**Ancient Sycamore in Bottomland**, 2002, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches, collection of Cal and Katrin Bean

**Ancient Beech Tree**, 2001, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches, private collection

**Giant Beech Tree in Winter**, 2001-02, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches, collection of Kathy and Tracey Shaw

**Old Beech Tree**, 2001, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches, collection of Warner Parks Nature Center; Nashville Metro Parks

**Study of Giant Bur Oak Tree**, 2001, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches, collection of Susan and Luke Simons

**Left Staircase Leading to Wisteria Arbor**, 2000, graphite on paper, 17 x 10 inches, collection of Cheekwood

**Right Staircase Leading to Wisteria Arbor**, 2000, graphite on paper, 17 x 10 inches, collection of Cheekwood

**Study of Details from an Old Garden**, 2000, graphite on paper, 17 x 10 inches, collection of Cheekwood

**View of Wisteria Arbor at Cheekwood**, 2000, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches, collection of Cheekwood, p. 8

**Doorway and Exterior Section of Cheekwood with Boxwood Paths**, 1999, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches, collection of Cheekwood, p. 8

**Left Side of Entrance Gateway to Cheekwood**, 1999, graphite on paper, 16 x 10 inches, collection of Cheekwood

**Right Side of Entrance Gateway to Cheekwood**, 1999, graphite on paper, 16 x 10 inches, collection of Cheekwood

**Severed Oak Surrounded by New Growth**, 1992-2005, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**The Old House**, 1986-87, graphite on paper, 24.5 x 15 inches, collection of Cal and Katrin Bean, p. 11

**A Severance of Crosses**, 1988, graphite on paper, 29 x 23 inches, collection of Mickey Turner, p. 11

**Study of Oak Tree in Open Field**, 1988-89, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches, collection of Ann Perkins

**Fragments of the Seen and of the Unseen**, 1985-2015, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches, collection of Charles Brindley, *inside front cover (detail)*

**Fragments of the Seen and of the Unseen**, 1985-2015, graphite on paper, 23 x 29 inches, collection of Charles Brindley, *inside back cover (detail)*

### Paintings

**Beech Tree in Granberry Grove**, 2014, oil on canvas, 30 x 24 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**Swan Lawn Chinquapin Oak at Cheekwood**, 2014-2015, oil on linen, 18 x 14 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**The Great and Ancient Osage Orange in Harrodsburg**, 2014, oil on canvas, 24x48 inches, collection of Sandra Bell

**The North Wall at Glen Leven**, 2014, oil on canvas, 66 x 46 inches, collection of Charles Brindley, p. 9

**Beech Tree in Granberry Grove**, 2013, oil on canvas, 24 x 30 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**Giant American Yellowwood Tree**, 2013, oil on canvas, 20 x 16 inches, collection of Michelle Haynes

**Old Beech Tree at Beechlawn**, 2012, oil on canvas, 30 x 24 inches, collection of Dr. & Mrs. Sam Kuykendall

**Old Beech Tree at the Edge of an Old Forest**, 2012, oil on linen, 18 x 24 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**The Angel Oak**, 2012, oil on canvas, 24 x 36 inches, collection of Gayley and Bob Patterson, p. 4

**The Angel Oak**, 2012, oil on linen, 24 x 18 inches, collection of David Goerss

**Old Beech Tree at Edge of Field**, 2011, oil on linen, 18 x 24 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**The Gateway**, 2011, oil on canvas, 48 x 36 inches, collection of Charles Brindley, p. 12

**The Great Bur Oak Overlooking Distant Field of Winter Oats**, 2011, oil on canvas, 30 x 40 inches, collection of Missy and John Lynch

**Giant Beech Tree in a Winter Forest**, 2010, oil on canvas, 44 x 36 inches, collection of Mr. & Mrs. Anthony S. Johnston

**Landscape at New Market**, 2010, oil on linen, 14 x 18 inches, collection of John and Rosalie Crispin

**The Angel Oak**, 2010-11, oil on canvas, 36 x 60 inches, collection of Heidi and John Hassenfeld

**Trunk Section of Old Beech Tree**, 2008, oil on canvas, 36 x 58 inches, collection of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Basham

**Winter Landscape in New Market**, 2008, oil on linen, 18 x 14 inches, collection of Anne and Lock Ross

**Beech Tree in Summer - Spirit of the Greenwood**, 2007, oil on canvas, 40 x 48 inches, collection of Gayley and Bob Patterson

**Landscape at New Market**, 2007, oil on canvas, 30 x 54 inches, collection of Linde and Blair Wilson, p. 12

**The Great Alluvial**, 2007, oil on canvas, 20 x 48 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**Ancient Red Oak on Edge of an Agricultural Landscape**, 2008, oil on canvas, 30 x 40 inches, collection of Nazanin Tashayod and Jamshid Khnoshnoodi, *front & back covers & p. 3*

**The Dark Man**, oil on canvas, 2005, 48 x 36 inches, collection of Cathy and Clay Jackson

**Giant Beech Tree in Winter**, 2003, oil on canvas, 58 x 40 inches, collection of Cathy and Clay Jackson, p. 13

**Devil's Wall**, 2001, oil on canvas, 26 x 24 inches, collection of Abigail and Peter Voysey

**The Green Man**, 2001, oil on canvas, 48 x 36 inches, collection of Ellen and George Wright, p. 6

**The Battle of Nashville Monument**, 1999-2001, oil on canvas, 66 x 46 inches, collection of Mary Ellen and Tom Rodgers, p. 14

**Fractured Passage in East Precipice**, 1997, oil on canvas, 66 x 46 inches, collection of Charles Brindley

**The Enclosure**, 1997, oil on canvas, 36 x 60 inches, collection of Linda and Michael Marzialo

**Entry in Fissure at Blackrock**, 1996-1997, oil on canvas, 48 x 36 inches, collection of Tennessee State Museum

**Enclosure in Bottomland**, 1995, oil on linen, 42 x 50 inches, collection of Sheila Baldwin

**Entry at Sapphire Ridge**, 1995, oil on canvas, 48 x 36 inches, collection of Ken Smith and Richard Bogle

**Enclosure at Riverside**, 1991, oil on canvas, 60 x 72 inches, collection of Tennessee State Museum

**Harpeth Burial Mound with Large Oak Trees**, 1985-86, oil on linen, 60 x 72 inches, collection of James C. Bradford III

