

Charles Brindley

Giant Ancient Chinquapin Oak, 2013

Graphite on paper

Collection of Capell and Ellis Simmons

It is estimated that this giant chinkapin (syn. chinquapin) oak (with the wonderful scientific name *Quercus Muehlenbergii*) is over 500 years old. Located just outside the Cheekwood property on Forrest Park Drive, this tree is very dear to many residents in the neighborhood. Over the years more housing units have gone up around the tree, and it is now difficult to see from the road. The Nashville Tree Foundation has declared this oak an ancient tree that needs to be preserved.

Charles Brindley

The Maples of Glen Leven, 2013

Graphite on board

Collection of Charles Brindley

Glen Leven farm was founded by Thomas Thompson, an early Nashville settler who arrived with James Robertson in the 1780s. The 65 acre farmstead passed from the Thompson family to The Land Trust for Tennessee which helped stabilize the old house built in 1857 and preserve the grounds. Glen Leven is now an arboretum and sanctuary, only minutes from downtown Nashville. Charles Brindley spent two years preparing studies and drawings at Glen Leven. One of the great tree families on the grounds are the majestic maple trees. The drawing *The Maples of Glen Leven* is a composite of trees and architectural elements suggesting a panoramic view that is both real and imaginative.

Charles Brindley

The Gateway, 2011

Oil on canvas

Collection of Charles Brindley

Large-scale paintings of stone outcroppings make up a series that the artist began to work on in the early 1990s. In works such as *The Gateway* or *The Green Man*, the distinction between realism and abstraction is unclear. In *The Gateway* massive boulders fill large swaths of canvas dwarfing everything around, even the vast sky. Crevices between the rocks make the sky look like water running into inlets. Art historian Robert McGrath refers to these rock formations as the “*geom mythology* or ritualized landscape that explores the darker recesses of the imagination.”

Charles Brindley

Devil's Wall, 2001

Oil on canvas

Collection of Abigail and Peter Voysey

Animosity between two neighboring land owners is an ancient conflict. In Europe the conflict often resulted in two separate walls with a neutral space between fences. Known in English parlance as *Mad Fence* or *Devil's Row*, Brindley found historic examples near Franklin, Tennessee. In this particular view of a Tennessee *Devil's Row*, the stone wall is somewhat dilapidated and overgrown with underbrush. Trees are now growing everywhere, yet the human conflict still reverberates through their gnarled and twisted shapes.

Charles Brindley

The Battle of Nashville Monument, 2001

Oil on canvas

Collection of MaryEllen and Tom Rodgers

The Battle of Nashville Monument was originally dedicated in 1927 to commemorate two wars. The horses represent the forces of North and South that fought at the Battle of Nashville in 1864. The young man holding the horses represents all Americans who died during World War I, thereby reuniting the country into a common cause. The bronze sculpture was created by Italian sculptor Giuseppe Moretti. Originally located on a plot of land near Franklin Pike, the monument was heavily damaged during a tornado in 1974. In 1999, the original bronze sculpture and a new marble obelisk with angel were rededicated by the Tennessee Historical Commission in a new park on the corner of Granny White Pike and Battlefield Drive.

In Charles Brindley's painting, the viewer is placed close up to the base with the monument towering high above. The sky, which changes from dark blue/violet to light blue/green, the branches reaching across the monument, and the flock of birds hovering ominously, all create a great sense of drama and mystery.

Charles Brindley

The Bonaventure Oaks, 2014

Graphite on paper

Collection of Mary Trabue Meyer

These two oak trees have taken their name from a house that was built on top of a hill in Belle Meade and has since been torn down. The current owner remembers growing up in the Bonaventure home, built by her grandparents, where she enjoyed the view of the two venerable oak trees in the back. The oaks are probably older than the Belle Meade neighborhood itself, dating back to when this was plantation land. The oaks are still on top of the hill - witnesses to a place filled with history and memory.

Charles Brindley

The Old House, 1986-1997

Graphite on paper

Collection of Katrin Bean

For Charles Brindley, *The Old House* has many personal memories. For eleven years, this solid brick antebellum home in East Nashville served as the artist's residence and studio. The drawing shows a view looking up to the second floor studio windows, including one that is round. Brindley remembers the sound of the black birds pecking away at the wood of the ceiling above him. He started the drawing in 1986 and finished it after moving in 1997. Over the years, he has been drawn to many architectural sources for inspiration. *The Old House* has all the mystery of what once was a stately mansion now showing the signs of disrepair.