

William Zorach

American, b. Lithuania, 1887- 1966

Interior and Exterior

oil on canvas, 1919

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Audio

Born in Lithuania, William Zorach immigrated to the United States with his family at the age of three, finally settling in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1896. Zorach studied with legendary Cleveland artist and teacher Henry Keller before meeting and becoming friends with artist William Sommer through his apprenticeship at the Otis Lithograph Company, where Sommer worked as a commercial illustrator. Sommer served as a mentor to the much younger Zorach, encouraging him to travel abroad to widen his artistic horizon. Zorach heeded his advice, traveling to Paris in 1910.

Yasuo Kuniyoshi

American, b. Japan, 1893- 1953

Morning

oil on canvas, 1920

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Lured by romantic ideas of America as a land of opportunity and prosperity, Yasuo Kuniyoshi left Japan and immigrated to the United States in 1906, at the age of thirteen. Soon after he arrived in California, Kuniyoshi enrolled at the Los Angeles School of Art and Design, and then, in 1910, he moved to New York, a city poised to become the center of an increasingly international art world. Kuniyoshi was invited to take part in the 1917 Society of Independent Artists exhibition, an artist-organized rebuttal to the annual juried exhibition of the conservative National Academy of Design.

By 1920, the year he completed this painting, Kuniyoshi was living in a small hut-like dwelling in Ogunquit, Maine. There, Kuniyoshi created works, like this, that fused traditional and modern ideas. Working in a style uniquely his own, Kuniyoshi created this interpretation of the American landscape. His stylized trees and shrubs with flattened perspective somehow reconcile both Modernist compositional gambits and the American Folk Art tradition.

George Wesley Bellows

American, 1882- 1925

Little Bridge

oil on canvas, 1920

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Born in Columbus, Ohio, George Bellows moved to New York in 1904 to study at the William Merritt Chase School of Art. He attracted the notice of New York critics with subjects selected from the city — scenes from the boxing ring, views of Manhattan tenements, and depictions of children swimming in the Hudson River. Throughout his career, Bellows's powerful imagery was characterized by his brushwork and the boldness of his color.

In June 1920, the Bellows family visited the burgeoning art colony of Woodstock, New York, in the Catskill Mountains. Invited by a friend, Bellows was immediately drawn to Woodstock's sociable community of artists as well as to its rolling hills, mature trees, rustic houses, and winding roads. Bellows was highly productive during his first interval in Woodstock, completing a number of landscapes during the summer and fall. This painting is a chromatic play of complementary colors, including yellow foliage and violet shadows completed during that time. Depicting an autumn day in a quiet valley in central New York, the painting displays the rolling hills, mature trees, rustic buildings, and winding roads of the area. The rickety wooden bridge in the center of the painting provides the title for this work.

Hugh Henry Breckenridge

American, 1870- 1937

The Valley

oil on canvas, ca. 1922

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

A native of Virginia, Hugh Breckenridge studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in the late 1880s and early 1890s. He then received a scholarship to continue his artistic training in Paris at the Académie Julian, a school known for its acceptance of American students. Enamored with the Impressionist movement, he began working in a modified version of that style, achieving a result that critics hailed as "refreshingly clean in color," marked by "an intelligent study of light," and "a very genuine and convincing love of certain aspects of nature."

Breckenridge continued to paint in this manner until a return trip to Paris in 1909 introduced him to the work of Paul Cézanne and Henri Matisse. Back in the United States, he became an early proponent of twentieth-century Modernism. Painted sometime in the early 1920s, *The Valley* exhibits elements of the geometricizing abstraction of the artists Breckenridge admired, yet it remains tempered by the still recognizable form of a pleasant country landscape. Working with bolder hues of brick red, deep rusty oranges, and dark purple-browns, Breckenridge's brand of Modernism continued to shock American audiences as late as the 1920s.

John Steuart Curry

American, 1897- 1946

Portrait of Stanley Young

oil on canvas, 1932

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Audio

One of the major figures in the American Regionalist movement, John Steuart Curry was born and raised on a farm in Kansas. After studying in Kansas City, Chicago, and Paris, Curry came to prominence in the late 1920s with paintings inspired by his Midwestern upbringing. Touching on everything from farming life, to line storms, to religious revivals, his work was widely embraced as authentically American.

During his time on the East Coast, Curry came to know many artists and writers. This painting captures the aspiring author and playwright Stanley Young three years before he became a literary critic for the *New York Times*. Curry captures Young as a large and powerful figure, but also contemplative, even wistful. He is seated at his desk among the instruments of his profession and identity — a typewriter, an inkwell, and stacks of books.

Ross Eugene Braught

American, 1898- 1983

Colorado Canyons

oil on canvas, ca. 1932-36

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Audio

In 1931, Pennsylvania born artist Ross Braught accepted a position as head of the Department of Painting at the Kansas City Art Institute. By then, he had already spent a number of years studying and working among notable artists at the Woodstock, New York, art colony. In Kansas City, his skills as a draftsman and painter influenced not only his students, but also his colleagues, including John Stockton de Martelly.

Joe Jones

American, 1909- 1963

The Road to the Beach

oil on board, 1933

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

By the beginning of 1933, Saint Louis artist Joe Jones had already established a reputation as one of the city's most promising and fiery young artists. Between 1930 and 1932, he exhibited his work at nearly all the major local venues and won the patronage of some of the city's most powerful supporters of the arts. In the spring of 1933, he met Elizabeth Green, also of Saint Louis, who would become not only his friend but also perhaps his most enthusiastic and influential patron. With Green's financial backing, Jones spent the summer of 1933 in Provincetown, Massachusetts, which would mark a turning point for the young artist.

The Road to the Beach, a dark and restless view of Provincetown's landscape, is one of the last pure landscapes that Jones produced before committing himself to making art with more overt social messages. A significant departure from the sleek and controlled landscapes he completed over the previous three years, this painting has agitated brushwork and an ominous sky, reflecting the change Provincetown brought about in Jones both as an artist and as an activist.

Carl Redin

American, b. Sweden, 1892- 1944

Cordova Church, New Mexico

oil on canvas, 1934

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

While a young boy living in Sweden, Carl Redin developed an interest in American culture. This fascination with the United States and its opportunities led him to immigrate in 1916. In 1926, the Albuquerque Women's Club held a solo exhibition of his work and within a year, Redin was one of the best-known artists in the growing city. He taught at the University of New Mexico from 1929 to 1939 and was twice elected president of the New Mexico Art League.

The landscape of the American Southwest served as Redin's primary subject matter. Mostly self-taught, he created powerful depictions of the New Mexico landscape that helped to shape popular perceptions of the region. Here, San Antonio de Padua chapel in Cordova, New Mexico, looms before a dramatic skyline dominated by heavy clouds shaped like mesas. Wispy clouds with alternating bands of shadow and light produce a vibrant sense of movement. Redin's landscapes often feature human settlements in the once inhospitable West.

Charles Ephraim Burchfield

American, 1893- 1967

In Memoriam

watercolor on paper, 1936

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Audio

By 1929, Charles Burchfield had gained considerable fame for his emotive and visionary watercolors, giving him the financial security to leave his day job despite the onslaught of the Great Depression. Though he said he was “much better off during the Depression” than many were, the harsh reality of the times inevitably influenced his work. It was during this time that he entered into a period marked by stark realism drawn from the direct observation of the world around him.

Carl Gaertner

American, 1898- 1952

Second Floor, Back

oil on canvas, 1938

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Audio

Carl Gaertner spent the 1920s painting the natural and industrial landscape in and around his hometown of Cleveland, Ohio. As well, he taught at the Cleveland School of Art alongside such notable figures as William Sommer, Frank Wilcox, and William Zorach. Gaertner’s relatively muted canvases of the 1920s gave way in the 1930s to decidedly darker tones, capturing the mood of Cleveland and much of the United States during the Great Depression. In his paintings of the Ohio landscape and Cleveland’s industrial tracts, he routinely incorporated semiabstract patterns and dramatic areas of light and shadow, as seen here.

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Suzanne Schweig Langsdorf Martyl

American, 1917- 2013

The Town

oil on Masonite, 1940

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Martyl was born in Saint Louis in 1917, the child of two prominent local artists. Something of a child prodigy, Martyl benefited from exposure to the artists in her parents' circle. She grew up among some of the more accomplished artists in Saint Louis, including Miriam McKinnie, Bernard E. Peters, Jessie Beard Rickly, Joseph P. Vorst, and especially Joe Jones, who would deeply influence her early career. By the time Martyl reached her mid-twenties, she had trained with Jones, Thomas Hart Benton, and Boardman Robinson, and been awarded mural commissions in Russell, Kansas, and Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, through the Treasury Department Section of Fine Arts.

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Jack Keijo Steele

American, 1919- 2003

The Sweeper

oil on masonite, ca. 1940-45

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Though born in the small town of Ironwood, Michigan, Jack Steele was largely raised in the blue-collar sections of Detroit, witnessing the city's boom as the worldwide center for automobile manufacturing. Steel found employment on the assembly lines of the Ford Motor Company, where he worked for the majority of his adult life. For a brief period, starting in 1940, he studied at the Cranbrook Academy of Art, just outside of Detroit.

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Raphael Gleitsmann

American, 1910- 1995

House at Sunset, Medina County, Ohio

oil on Masonite, ca. 1941

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

406**Audio**

After studying at the Cleveland School of Art, Raphael Gleitsmann returned to his hometown of Akron, Ohio, to pursue a career as an artist — just as the Great Depression was taking its hold on Middle America. He painted both industrial and rural landscapes in Akron and its surrounding regions. Through dark, dramatic lighting, his almost photographic imagery often suggests alienation, influenced by his own temperament, but also by the nation's struggles during the Depression and the onset of World War II.

Karl Priebe

American, 1914- 1976

The Letter

oil on masonite, ca. 1940-41

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Karl Priebe worked and taught in the Upper Midwest and achieved recognition for his work in New York, Paris, Mexico City, and Tokyo. However, his connections in Chicago, particularly his friendship with Gertrude Abercrombie proved most influential to his development as a painter. Together Priebe and Abercrombie became major proponents of Surrealism and Magical Realism in art, combining real and fantastical elements in their symbolic and often haunting canvases.

Priebe's passion for jazz music penetrated his paintings, and he began exploring themes of African American history and culture. He also enjoyed birds and bird watching, and often included avian imagery in his works. This undated painting combines these interests, as a young black woman has seemingly fallen asleep amid a barren landscape with only a dove flying overhead as her companion and protector. Surrounded mysteriously by uneaten pears, a tree branch, and a letter, the woman seems to be in intriguing circumstances, but her situation remains unclear and open to interpretation, a hallmark of Priebe's sketchy, dreamlike style. Dark and moody, this painting relays a prevailing sadness that most likely stems from the artist's discontent with the racial climate in 1930s and 1940s America.

Charles Sheeler

American, 1883- 1965

Tree and Landscape

oil on paper on board, 1947

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Influenced at the start of his career by artists Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso, Charles Sheeler is recognized as one of the central figures in the emergence of American Modernism. While Sheeler started his career in a highly abstract style, he went on to become a pioneer of non-figurative realism.

In the late 1940s, after decades of working in his trademark highly realistic style, Sheeler returned to a kind of abstraction similar to that of his early years. Completed in 1947, this painting is a product of that shift in style, walking the line between representation and abstraction. The flattened surface plane and the loose brushwork both within the tree's forms and in the cool-toned space behind it reveal a stylistic freedom not seen since his first attempts at painting more than thirty years earlier.

Roy Hilton

American, 1891- 1963

Back to the Barn

oil on canvas, ca. 1947

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

A native of Massachusetts, Roy Hilton spent the majority of his early career working in Boston. In 1928, he moved to Pittsburgh to teach painting at the city's Carnegie Institute. Throughout the 1930s, Hilton regularly exhibited at the nation's premier venues and completed two post office murals through the Works Progress Administration.

As Hilton's career progressed, his work increasingly began to feature hard-edged outlines and geometric patterning. His painting *The Big Barn* received a prize from the 1943 exhibition of the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh. He then completed this painting, *Back to the Barn*, four years later. Both works reveal the steady hand and precise line that had already garnered him recognition, but in this canvas, Hilton placed an even greater emphasis on abstract patterning. The triangular forms of the gabled barns and other outbuildings repeat in the geometry of the lavender sky. The interlocking network of white structures, with dark roofs, stand in sharp contrast to the simplified landscape in the foreground.

Frank Wilcox

American, 1887- 1964

On the Cliffs

oil on canvas, 1930

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

A major figure in Cleveland's art scene, Frank Wilcox trained in Paris at the Académie Colarossi before returning to his hometown to teach at the Cleveland School of Art. There he became a mentor to up-and-coming artists such as Charles Burchfield, Clarence Carter, and Carl Gaertner, while also exhibiting works at the Cleveland Museum of Art's annual May Show and supplementing his income by working as a book illustrator. Art he encountered in Paris influenced his early paintings in oil and watercolor, but around the late 1910s he switched to a style more rooted in the realism that was coming to epitomize American Scene painting.

Walter Wellington Quirt

American, 1902- 1968

The Future Belongs to the Workers

tempera on board, 1933

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Audio

Pioneering American Surrealist painter Walter Quirt was born into a working-class family in rural Michigan. His interest in art led him to study and then teach drawing and painting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Early in his career, Quirt aligned himself with other politically radical artists and became an outspoken supporter of workers' rights. With the start of the Great Depression and his move to New York in 1929, he became even more passionately committed to leftist ideals through his membership in the newly formed John Reed Club, an organization founded to support and promote Marxist artists and writers and their message of social equality.

Arthur Durston

American, b. England, 1897- 1938

Mother and Child

oil on canvas, 1936

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Born in England, in 1897, Arthur Durston left his home country in the late 1910s or early 1920s, escaping his parents' disapproval of his ambition to become an artist. Durston arrived in the Los Angeles area by 1930, where he devoted his time to painting scenes of local industry as well as numerous depictions of Madonna-like mothers and their children. His work appeared in local art shows and attracted acclaim from art critics in southern California, but Durston's career was cut short with his untimely death in 1938, apparently from starvation.

By the time Durston completed *Mother and Child* in 1936, he had already established the subject as a preferred theme. Two years earlier, in 1934, a critic for the *Los Angeles Times* noted "few painters anywhere have painted a newborn baby with such tender truth as Durstan in his 'Mother and Child.'" Despite the fact that the child in this painting is no longer a newborn, the painting retains much of the same tenderness praised by the critic, as the mother effortlessly soothes her flushed toddler. Depicting an intimate moment the painting succeeds in conveying the ineffable bond between a mother and her child.

James Britton Gantt

American, 1911- 1984

Side Show

tempera on panel, 1937

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

408
Audio

James Gantt was just two years old when his alcoholic father abandoned him, and still young when his mother contracted tuberculosis and had to enter a sanatorium. A wealthy aunt stepped in to finish raising the boy and saw to his education, but when Gantt was a teenager his mother tried to regain custody, and he ran away from home. After some time roaming in the country working odd jobs, his artistic talent always in evidence, he enrolled in the Dallas Art Institute in 1933 on scholarship. The following year he received another scholarship to attend the Kansas City Art Institute.

Abraham Harriton

American, b. Romania, 1893- 1986

6th Avenue Unemployment Agency

oil on canvas, 1937

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Born in Romania, but raised mostly in the United States, Abraham Harriton studied at the National Academy of Design in New York in 1908. In the early years of his career, Harriton subscribed to academic methods, but when the Great Depression began to grip the United States in the early 1930s, his style became darker and his subjects were often drawn from the plight of the American worker. His increasing use of Social Realist devices in his paintings of the 1930s was in line with his political views, which were steadily shifting toward Communism.

Painted in 1937, one of the most discouraging years of the Great Depression, this painting is a panoramic view of impoverished workers crowding around lists of posted day jobs. The muted tones of Harriton's palette reflect the bleak outlook for these desperate men and women.

Lloyd Lózes Goff

American, 1908/10- 1982

Thanksgiving Day Parade

oil on canvas, 1938

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

409

Audio

Born and raised in Dallas, Texas, Lloyd Goff studied at the Dallas Art Institute, and then spent 1928 in Paris as a student at both the Académie Julian and the Académie de la Grande Chaumière. By the early 1930s he had arrived at the Art Students League in New York. Goff's work appeared in a number of notable exhibitions in Texas in the 1930s, and studies for the mural he created for the Post Office in Cooper, Texas, on view at the Julien Levy Gallery in Manhattan in 1939, received critical approval.

Goff completed, signed, and dated *Thanksgiving Day Parade* in 1938, but the scene depicted is actually the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade of 1934. Looking south, with Columbus Circle on the right, the Hudson Motor Car Company on the left, and the three-year-old Empire State Building in the distance, Goff captured the overcast skies and some of the 500,000 strong who lined the parade route and "were dampened but undeterred by an intermittent drizzle."

Clyde Singer

American, 1908- 1999

Barn Dance

oil on canvas, 1938

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

410
Audio

Clyde Singer painted engaging scenes of American life in Ohio. Apart from just a two-year stint (in 1933 and 1934) studying at the Art Students League in New York, Singer spent his entire career in his native state. Usually tinged with homespun humor, his work appeared regularly in major exhibitions across the United States and garnered praise from some of the country's most notable critics. In addition to being a busy artist, for fifty-five years Singer was also the assistant director of the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown.

Reginald Marsh

American, b. France, 1897- 1955

Mad Men of Europe

watercolor on paper, 1940

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

407
Audio

Born in Paris to wealthy American parents, Reginald Marsh was raised in the United States with near constant exposure to the arts. In 1916, he entered Yale University, where he became active as an illustrator at the university's humor magazine, the *Yale Record*. Upon his graduation in 1920, Marsh moved to New York, where he immediately began producing drawings for publications including the *New York Herald*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *Vanity Fair*. Marsh developed a highly personal style that combined the narrative-driven qualities of illustration with the skillful draftsmanship of rarefied fine art.

Despite his privileged upbringing, Marsh typically sought his subject matter from the grittier sections of New York. With a satirical but never condescending eye, he depicted everything from tattoo parlors to burlesque halls, but the movie theater became a particularly favorite place of his for observing modern life.

Edward Dobrotka

American, 1917- 1977

Bryant Park Chorus

oil on board, 1940

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Edward Dobrotka's artistic talent earned him a scholarship to the Cleveland School of Art in 1936. While a student there, he began submitting work to the Cleveland Museum of Art's annual May Show, where his painting *Man of the Renaissance* won first prize in 1939. After graduation he left Cleveland for New York. There, Dobrotka worked as an assistant to Joe Shuster, another Cleveland native, inking the drawings of the artists who created the *Superman* comics. He often visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where he found inspiration in the works of Renaissance artists.

Once in New York, Dobrotka embraced Social Realism and painted cityscapes and other subjects with political messages. In this painting, the artist presents a bustling view of Forty-Second Street, with the New York Public Library and Chrysler Building in the background. Men appear in a row, like a chorus line, with their right arms and legs extended, trying to attract customers for shoeshines. As more African Americans moved to the North, many turned to the shoeshine trade, formerly dominated by immigrants. The men's forms are echoed by the placement of the trees behind them. Dobrotka carefully composed the picture so that the line of men, the subway grate on which they stand, the crowd on the left, and the fence and trees on the right converge at the base of a skyscraper.

Henry Koerner

American, b. Austria, 1915- 1991

Resurrecting a Ship

oil on Masonite, ca. 1940

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Henry Koerner was born and raised in a working-class Jewish family in Vienna, where he frequently visited the city's Kunsthistorisches Museum and its paintings by Pieter Brueghel. Soon after graduating from the Vienna Academy of Design in 1937, Koerner fled Austria and Nazi Germany's persecution of Jews. Arriving in the United States, he continued to paint, finding work initially as a commercial artist in Brooklyn.

Painted during his first years in New York, *Resurrecting a Ship*, a dynamic and finely detailed harbor view, reveals Koerner's interest in common people and their perseverance of spirit as they struggled through the end of the Great Depression. Aided by a bright red machine pumping water out of the hull, the men in the painting raise a ship in hope of once again making it useful, while groups of young boys find various ways to enjoy it for recreation.

John Stockton De Martelly

American, 1903- 1979

While the Sun Shines (Haying)

tempera on canvas mounted on plywood, 1943-45

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Moving from Philadelphia to Kansas City in the mid-1930s to teach at the city's Art Institute, John Stockton de Martelly forged fast friendships with the odd, mystical painter Ross Braught. Braught, who was then head of the school's painting department, and his successor Regionalist titan Thomas Hart Benton would come to have a profound influence on De Martelly's work. Benton encouraged his colleague to look closely at the lives of ordinary people for inspiration.

Under Benton's influence, De Martelly began producing paintings and lithographs of rural life, tinged with a sardonic, almost surrealistic feeling. This painting presents a traditional view of daily life for the Midwest's many farmers, a result of the artist's fascination with the ritualistic practices of hay production he witnessed there. Celebrating the American work ethic, he derived the title from the old proverb "make hay while the sun shines," about seizing opportunities before they expire. Seizing his own opportunities, De Martelly translated *While the Sun Shines* into a lithograph of the same name that saw widespread distribution.

Doris Emrick Lee

American, 1905- 1983

The View, Woodstock

oil on canvas, 1946

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Born in 1905 in Illinois, Doris Lee grew up in an environment that nurtured her childhood interest in drawing and painting. After attending boarding school in prosperous Lake Forest, Illinois, and graduating from Rockford College in 1927, she traveled throughout the United States and Europe to study art. In 1931, Lee moved to New York with her husband, painter Arnold Blanch. The couple circulated with some of the city's most avant-garde artists and also kept a summer home in the popular artists' colony of Woodstock, New York. Lee found continual inspiration in the town's pastoral charm, painting rustic views or rural life, and at times even nostalgic subjects.

Re-creating the experience of looking out her studio window with its painted drapes and drawstrings, here Lee constructed a seemingly simple view of farm life. Her modernism appears in the ghostly outlined mountains in the distance, and in the duck, water pump, and pitcher in the foreground, forming a subtle play on absence and presence. In addition, the female worker in the composition contrasts with the male figure relaxing on the hammock, a subversion of traditional notions of gender and a reinforcement of Lee's statement, "No, I am not primitive. I am very conscious of what I am doing."

Edmund Brucker

American, 1912- 1999

Cleveland Flats

oil on board, ca. 1930

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Edmund Brucker trained in his hometown, at the Cleveland School of Art, where he also eventually joined the faculty. He started showing his work at the annual exhibition of the Cleveland Museum of Art in his late teenage years, a period of early creativity when he began interpreting the specifics of his city's landscape.

Robert Gilbert

American, 1907- 1988

Industrial Composition

oil on canvas, 1932

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Born in Fort Wayne, Indiana, Robert Gilbert was raised in Santa Ana, California, where he remained for the majority of his life, aside from a brief time spent in New York. In California, the young Gilbert set out to become a professional artist, but the onset of the Great Depression forced him to seek employment at the Santa Ana Gas Company, where he worked throughout the 1930s and into the 1940s. Intensely observant, he continued to paint during his tenure at the gas company, drawing inspiration from the men who worked alongside him and the distinct architecture that surrounded them.

Completed not long after Gilbert joined the Santa Ana Gas Company, this painting features the sleek and simplified Deco-inspired forms that would come to typify his industrial views, not only in the structures and equipment, but in the workingmen as well. Depicting a hauntingly new American landscape — and a new American worker — the scene takes on a surrealistic tone through the dark, ominous sky and the dominating green pressure cylinder in the foreground. Gilbert's intimate familiarity with his subject matter gave his paintings a certain authenticity that found favor and acceptance among local art critics and collectors.

Earl Rowland

American, 1890- 1963

The Smelters (Men of Steel)

oil on canvas, 1934

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Earl Rowland studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and then the School of Industrial Arts in Los Angeles. After serving in the United States Army during World War I, he returned to Los Angeles and established himself in the local art scene, until 1930. Rowland then moved north to Stockton, California, to accept a teaching position at the College of the Pacific. In 1937, he became director of Stockton's Pioneer and Haggin Art Gallery (now the Haggin Museum), a position he would hold for more than twenty-five years.

Although Stockton is best known as an agricultural community, its busy inland port attracted a number of industries, including ironworks. Rowland's *The Smelters* is a powerful image of American industry. A bucket of molten iron, white hot and expelling noxious smoke, is transported overhead from the blast furnace to molds. Below workers alive to the dangers look up and track the bucket's movement. Enormously disproportionate to the size of the workers, the bucket seemingly inspires awe over the men who operate it.

Harry Louis Freund

American, 1905- 1999

Crossroad Forum

oil on board, 1935

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

411
Audio

Harry Louis Freund was a painter, muralist, and educator, most often associated with the summer school of art he founded in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. A native of Clinton, Missouri, Freund trained at the University of Missouri and at Washington University in Saint Louis, before embarking on a year of European study in 1929 and 1930. Upon returning to the United States, he kept a studio for two years in New York, and in 1933, he produced murals for the Missouri Exhibit at the Century of Progress World's Fair in Chicago.

Freund traveled throughout the Ozarks in 1934 and 1935, documenting the rural culture of Missouri and Arkansas. For the remainder of the 1930s, Freund completed post-office murals in Arkansas, Kansas, and Missouri commissioned by the Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts. This painting represented Arkansas in an exhibition of contemporary art at the 1939 New York World's Fair and at San Francisco's Golden Gate International Exposition in 1940.

Ernest Fiene

American, b. Germany, 1894- 1965

Mill Town in Winter

oil on canvas, ca. 1935-37

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

412
Audio

Ernest Fiene immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1912. He soon became a student at the National Academy of Design, studying under Leon Kroll and Thomas Maynard. He also trained at the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design and the Art Students League. In 1919, Fiene had his first solo exhibition at the MacDowell Club. The proceeds from sales at another solo show at the New Gallery funded the construction of his studio in Woodstock, New York, where he was a part of the vibrant artists colony there. Fiene traveled to Paris and enrolled at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière from 1928 to 1929, and in 1932, he studied mural painting in Florence, Italy, on a Guggenheim Fellowship. Fiene's talent and reputation earned him numerous awards over the course of his career, as well as teaching positions at Famous Artist School in Connecticut and Cooper Union in New York.

During the 1930s, Fiene became known as a painter of the American Scene. His views of New York and Pennsylvania captured the relationships among people and the environments in which they lived, as well as the dramatic changes that industrialization wrought on the landscape.

Edward Millman

American, 1907- 1964

Drilling for Oil

oil on canvas, 1940

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Edward Millman studied painting at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in the 1920s and traveled to Mexico in the 1930s, where he refined his skills as a muralist with José Orozco and Diego Rivera. Back in the United States, he painted murals through the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project in Chicago and other smaller Illinois cities. He was eventually named the Illinois director of the WPA's mural division in 1935. Millman was also an instructor at Chicago's Hull House, which helped immigrants assimilate to life in the United States. His work there inspired many of his socially conscious canvases.

Millman's easel paintings of the 1930s and the early 1940s are closely linked to his WPA mural projects. Many of his murals spoke to the nobility and heroism of the American worker, though he generally avoided overtly radical symbols other artists used to declare their sympathy for the working class. Influenced by the Mexican muralists he so admired, Millman often used simplified forms and a muted palette, but without dehumanizing his subjects. This painting depicts two men in the foreground, monumental in scale, operating a rig. In contrast to the sunny mountainous landscape and sky behind them, the powerful workers toil in shadow and quiet resolve. The artist avoids forcing his workers into bland uniformity. Each man in this image is unique in pose, garb, and in the tasks he performs. The man on the right looks directly at the viewer, as if each one

Lois Mabel Head

American, b. 1906

Factory Town

oil on panel, ca. 1940-44

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Born in Denver, Colorado, Louis Mabel Head studied at the University of Utah before moving to New York in the early 1920s. There she exhibited at some of the city's most prestigious venues, including group shows at the National Academy of Design and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and a solo exhibition with the Association of American Artists. In addition to painting, Head was also a printmaker, craft artist, and writer.

Completed during the early 1940s this painting is a nocturnal view of Pittsburgh, its ubiquitous smokestacks filling the night sky. The central figure, a voluptuous wide-hipped prostitute dressed in red, looks over her shoulder wanly at the men who have just declined her services. Mature nocturnal themes were a well-known part of Head's oeuvre. This image became one of Head's best-known works when it was included in Aimée Crane's and Bernard De Voto's 1945 compilation *Portrait of America*, where it was featured in a full-color illustration.

Arthur Osver

American, 1912- 2006

Red Ventilator

oil on Masonite, 1945

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Born in Chicago, Arthur Osver lived the majority of his life in urban settings — Chicago, New York, Rome, and Saint Louis. Aware of his environment wherever he lived, he became fascinated by the buildings and industrial structures that constitute the modern urban landscape. The son of working-class Russian immigrants, Osver frequently focused his art on scenes of blue-collar labor and urban environments. His unique depictions of industrialized forms often play with perspective and scale to convey both the complexity and perplexity of modern life.

Blurring the line between representational and abstract, this painting is a powerful view of twentieth-century industry and labor, with the tiny worker in the background literally — and metaphorically — overpowered by the imposing red ventilator. Osver found pleasure in “taking something and giving it another identity,” creating a kind of machine-age monster in the ventilator's tentacle-like arms and looming presence. Contrasting the smoldering color of the ventilator with the cool blue sky, Osver wittingly captured the tension between the natural and man-made in the modern landscape, a subject that he continued to explore over the course of his career.

Edmund Lewandowski

American, 1914- 1998

Blast Furnace #5

oil on canvas, 1949

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

A native of Milwaukee, Edmund Lewandowski sought inspiration in an evolving Midwestern landscape. Painting American views in an exceptionally American fashion, Lewandowski depicted the changing landscape around him. Though fascinated by the heavy industry of the Upper Midwest since childhood, Lewandowski only started studying the forms and processes of blast furnaces as an artistic subject in the late 1930s and early 1940s. At that point, he began a series of paintings that explored the shapes, lines, and angles that defined industrial structures. By the time he completed this painting in 1949, Lewandowski had narrowed his view to the pipes, metal cross bracing, and ladders of the furnaces' upper areas, depicting them as almost abstract arrangements of flat shape and color.

George Copeland Ault

American, 1891- 1948

The Stairway

oil on canvas, 1921

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Born into a wealthy family in Cleveland, Ohio, George Copeland Ault spent the majority of his youth in London, studying at the prestigious Slade School of Fine Art, but his charmed early life would soon turn dark. From the late 1910s on, the Ault family experienced one tragedy after another, including the loss of the family wealth, the death of George's mother in a psychiatric hospital, and the eventual suicides of his three brothers. Ault himself struggled with alcoholism much of his career and also died of an apparent suicide by drowning near his home in Woodstock, New York, in 1948.

Despite a life of misfortune, Ault quietly became a leader in the style of painting that emerged after World War I known as Precisionism, which was characterized by crisp lines, smooth surfaces, and a minimized human presence. Completed in 1921, just as Precisionism was coalescing as a cohesive movement, this painting reveals Ault's command of the style. An ominous sense of loneliness envelops this scene, a reflection not only of Ault's personal isolation but also of the nation's feelings of loss and uncertainty following the trauma of World War I. Plagued by depression, Ault would continue to work in the Precisionist style for the remainder of his life, using simplified forms, planes of flat color, and ambiguous spaces to convey his particular view of the American experience.

Anton Refregier

American, b. Russia, 1905- 1979

The Park Bench

oil on canvas, 1930

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Born in Moscow and raised in an age of revolution and war, Anton Refregier was sent to Paris when he was fifteen years old to study art and sculpture. Ultimately he made his way to the United States, in 1921, and eventually attended the Rhode Island School of Design on a scholarship. In the late 1920s, Refregier moved to Woodstock, New York, and by the early 1930s, his work was exhibited frequently in Manhattan. Interested in mural painting even before it became part of the federal government's recovery plan for artists, he painted some of his best-known works on the walls of public buildings.

Benjamin Messick

American, 1891- 1981

Jitterbug Contest

oil on canvas, 1935

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Benjamin Messick gained acclaim in the 1930s for his depictions of the leisure activities of middle- and working-class people. He was born near the Ozark town of Stafford, Missouri, but after serving in the Army during World War I, he moved to Los Angeles to take classes in cartooning. Deciding to focus instead on making works of fine art, he enrolled at the Chouinard School of Art in 1925. Soon his submissions to annual exhibitions at institutions such as the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art earned awards, as well as positive reviews from critics. Later in his career, Messick became known for his paintings featuring circus subjects.

In this painting, Messick used his childhood memories of peeping into honkeytonks as the basis for a dynamic view of musicians and dancers before a swirling blue and yellow background. The figures are organized into a vortex, a unique compositional device well suited to conveying both the strong circular motion of the dancers and the energy of the music. The artist reproduced many of his paintings, including this one, as lithographs since he believed that "art is for the people, not solely for the connoisseur."

Helen Lundeberg

American, 1908- 1999

Iris

oil on canvas, ca. 1936

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Audio

Helen Lundeberg attended the Stickney Memorial School of Art in Pasadena, California, where she studied under her teacher and future husband Lorser Feitelson. Feitelson encouraged her to study the works of Renaissance and modernist painters. The two later collaborated artistically, creating a new movement called Post-Surrealism, an American response to European Surrealism. Unlike European Surrealism, which emphasized the irrational and dreams, followers of Post-Surrealism created artwork intended to encourage the viewer to engage in active rational contemplation.

James Guy

American, 1909- 1983

On the Waterfront

oil on Masonite, 1937

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Audio

James Guy created politically charged art to help fight for worker's rights. A native of Connecticut, Guy most likely first encountered European Surrealism in 1931 when the Wadsworth Athenaeum in his hometown of Hartford mounted the landmark exhibition *Newer Super Realism*, which included works by international avant-garde artists such as Salvador Dalí and Giorgio de Chirico. Upon his subsequent move to New York, he immediately began integrating the dreamlike qualities of Surrealism into his paintings centered on social justice. Guy developed a distinct brand of Social Surrealism through distortion of form, perspective, and narrative.

Clarence Holbrook Carter

American, 1904- 2000

Down the River

oil on canvas, 1937

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Born in the rural community of Portsmouth, Ohio, Clarence Holbrook Carter followed his childhood interest in drawing and illustration and attended the Cleveland School of Art in 1923. While still in school, Carter became friends with William Mathewson Milliken, the curator of paintings at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Milliken's advice and patronage led Carter to travel extensively throughout Western Europe, where he discovered the "magic qualities" of the Italian school. When Carter returned home, he filtered the Italians' ideas of design and mysticism into his own work, and he quickly became an important and prominent member of the Cleveland arts community.

By the time Carter completed this painting in 1937, he was in the middle of a year and a half tenure as the general superintendent of the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project of Northeastern Ohio. A bleak, somewhat ominous view of two women seen from behind overlooking a muddied brown waterway, this painting speaks to the despair felt by Americans as a whole and by the arts community in particular during the Great Depression. Despite the dark outlook, there is an invisible but palpable kinship between the two women that instills optimism and displays solidarity.

Zoltan Sepeshy

American, b. Hungary, 1898- 1974

Driftwood (The Dying Tree)

egg tempera on panel, ca. 1940

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Zoltan Sepeshy, born in Hungary, influenced generations of students at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. After studying both art and art education at the Royal Academy of Arts in Budapest, young Sepeshy traveled around Europe, honing his skills as a painter in both Vienna and Paris before immigrating to the United States in 1921. He very quickly made his way to Detroit, and after working and teaching at various institutions in the city, was named director of painting at Cranbrook in 1930.

Despite his claim that modern art was a "too abrupt departure from conventionality" and "disturbing, especially to those of us who are steeped in long tradition," this painting from around 1940 reveals his interest in exploring other styles of painting for himself. In this surrealistic landscape, the remnants of a fallen tree are scattered across the desolate sands of a dreamlike beach. Completely devoid of life, these relics, with their sharp, jagged points and tanned hue, transform into skeletal remains under the watch of vulturelike seagulls looming overhead. Though bizarre, Sepeshy's vision remains indebted to the tenets of traditional painting through his emphasis on light and shadow, volume, and tone, yet simultaneously represents a departure for the artist as he sought to combine theory and practice in his work.

Gertrude Abercrombie

American, 1909- 1977

Night Arrives

oil on Masonite, ca. 1948

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Chicago-based Gertrude Abercrombie, was one of the major figures in founding the Magic Realism movement. In the mid-1930s she worked for the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project. Employment in the government program gave her the confidence to explore her talents, and she developed a deeply personal, original style. Her sense of humor, and perhaps most important, her mystical approach to her dreams, all contributed to the inimitable character of her art.

Abercrombie frequently painted herself in hauntingly spare and sometimes absurd landscapes. Based largely on her dreams, her paintings consist of recurring elements. In *Night Arrives*, Abercrombie dons a coral-colored dress that appears in many of her nocturnal subjects and walks along the shore, stopping before a seashell. Shells also appear frequently in her work, along with lighthouses, whales, and moons, all of which are included in this painting. The mask worn at the back of the woman's head — the one element that is seemingly unique to the work — echoes the form of the lighthouse on the island. Its presence suggests a deep, personal struggle with identity.

Robert Tindall

American, 1913- 1983

Winged Victory

tempera on board, ca. 1940

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

A native of Missouri, Robert Tindall studied both art and art education at the University of Kansas before training at the Kansas City Art Institute with Thomas Hart Benton. The two artists became so close that Benton invited Tindall, along with fellow student Roger Norman Medearis, to exhibit with him in New York in 1940. Though in his personal life Tindall appeared to be a loner, professionally, he sought the encouragement and camaraderie provided by associations with fellow artists. Back in his hometown, he became a charter member of what is now known as the Independence Art Association, to which he eventually left his estate to establish an art scholarship in his name.

Tindall explored the age-old theme of the cycle of life in the painting *Winged Victory*, an eerie view of a rotting skull among the fallen leaves of autumn. The small bird perched on the fallen soldier's helmet represents the "winged victory" of life over death, despite the atrocities of war. This painting was very successful for the artist. It was featured in the Carnegie Institute's *Directions in American Painting* exhibition in December 1941, and was illustrated in Ralph M. Pearson's book *The New Art Education* that same year as an example of a "a still-life which emerges from the studio into life."

John Wilde

American, 1919- 2006

Untitled

oil on board, ca. 1941

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

As a boy growing up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, John Wilde expressed an interest in drawing. While still in high school, he visited the studio of local artist Santos Zingale and became enamored with the creative process. While still a young man, Wilde met Karl Priebe who would become a lifelong friend and fellow proponent of Surrealism in American art. Upon entering the University of Wisconsin at Madison in 1938, Wilde began to pursue his interest, and from the beginning gravitated to a highly personal and imaginative style, created with his own handmade inks and oils.

Most likely created while Wilde was still at the university, this painting features many of the compositional elements that recur in the artist's early experiments with Surrealism. The colorful and primitive rock formations, various fantastical creatures and botanical specimens, and intriguing tromp l'oeil elements would all become recurring themes in what the artist would call his "Wildeworld" constructions. At the forefront of the composition, Wilde inserted an ethereal self-portrait in profile, asserting that he is the creator and overseer of his hallucinogenic world. Not long after this painting's completion, the United States Army drafted Wilde for service in World War II. His experience in the war further enforced his commitment to subversive art, and he continued to work in a Surrealistic method for the remainder of his long career.

James Harold Noecker

American, 1912- 2002

The Genius?

oil on canvas, ca. 1942-43

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Audio

Born in Illinois, Harold Noecker is most closely associated with the modernist movement in Chicago from the 1930s and 1940s. Noecker's works reveal the influence of European Surrealism, which found its way to Chicago early through publications, exhibitions, and a small coterie of pioneering collectors. Colleagues in Chicago such as Gertrude Abercrombie and Karl Priebe, joined Noecker in his embrace of Surrealist aesthetic ideas. Noecker showed *The Genius?* in the spring of 1943 at the annual exhibition of works by Chicago artists at the Art Institute of Chicago.

John Rogers Cox

American, 1915- 1990

Wheat Field

oil on Masonite, ca. 1943

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

John Rogers Cox was born and raised in Indiana. After studying art in Philadelphia at the University of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, he moved to New York in the early 1930s, but returned home in 1938 following his father's death. In 1941, the newly established Sheldon Swope Art Gallery in Terre Haute, Indiana, appointed him its first director. During his brief tenure, Cox oversaw the acquisition of works by the country's leading American Scene painters, including Thomas Hart Benton, Charles Burchfield, Edward Hopper, Zoltan Sepeshy, and Grant Wood.

Throughout his directorship at the museum, Cox continued to paint, inspired by the fertile farmland surrounding his hometown. He completed this painting around 1943, as he was nearing the end of his three years at the Swope. Finely detailed, the image conveys the quiet, almost surrealistic beauty and overwhelming vastness of western Indiana farm country. Contrasting with his depiction of the abundance of an American harvest, the mysterious cumulous cloud hovering overhead, a recurring element in Cox's work from the 1940s, casts an eerie, even supernatural shadow on the composition. Though he left Terre Haute not long after completing this painting, Cox would continue to combine his interest in Surrealism with his connection to the Midwestern landscape for the remainder of his career, seeking to create a sense of "mysterious pleasure" in his works.

John Carlton Atherton

American, 1900- 1952

The Sleepers

oil on canvas, 1945

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

A native of Minnesota, John Atherton served a brief tour of duty for the United States Army in World War I, studied painting in San Francisco, and then moved to New York in 1929. There he worked as a commercial illustrator, refining his skills as a draftsman, and creating advertisements for some of the largest corporations of the 1930s, including General Motors and Shell Oil. Throughout his years working in advertising, Atherton continued to paint independently, producing mysteriously symbolic canvases that allude to a dark and ominous sensibility.

Hazel Janicki

American, b. Britain, 1918- 1976

Theatre

oil on Masonite, 1945

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Hazel Janicki was born in London, England, but moved to Cleveland, Ohio, with her family in 1928. After suffering a long illness, she was advised by her doctor to take up painting, and in 1941, Janicki graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Art. During World War II, Janicki designed displays at the Cleveland Public Library and received an honorable mention in the Artist Victory mural competition for her mural at the USO Lounge in Cleveland. Her work also won many prizes at the May Show between 1943 and 1949. She exhibited her work extensively at galleries across the country and in 1949, received a fellowship from the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation. Later in life she taught design, drawing, and painting at Kent State University until her death in 1976.

This painting exemplifies Janicki's interest in exploring theatrical and circus subjects in her art. Its mysterious composition presents fancifully dressed figures in an imaginative landscape under a clouded sky. In the right foreground, a woman, representing the artist, appears in a frame, her arm extended slightly beyond the frame's boundaries.

Grace Martin Frame Taylor

American, 1903- 1995

Untitled (Still Life)

oil on artist board, ca. 1929-40

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

After studying at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia and at West Virginia University in the 1920s, Grace Martin Taylor devoted herself to becoming an artist. Taylor quickly began working in a modified version of pure abstraction. Producing canvases like this one in an early phase of her professional career, Taylor maintained a minimal representational quality while asserting herself as a modernist interested in a Cubist-informed abstraction.

Influenced by her cousin, a printmaker and painter, Taylor began working in a modified version of pure abstraction in 1924. The bold white contours of the objects in her still life are adapted from the white-line method for printmaking that her cousin frequently used.

Valleja "Wally" Strautin

American, 1898- 1989

Abstract

oil on canvas, ca. 1930

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Wally Strautin studied painting at the Cooper Union School of Art in New York, graduating in 1931. There she met and became friends with modernists such as Lee Krasner and Jackson Pollock. Though she produced portraits and murals, Strautin found her voice as a painter in geometric-based abstraction. In conversation with and inspired by Krasner, Strautin began experimenting with abstraction early in her career. For fifteen years between 1929 and 1944, she exhibited her work with New York's Society of Independent Artists, an organization founded in 1916 to promote the work of avant-garde contemporary artists.

In *Abstract*, she created a complex web of colors, lines, shapes, and textures that appear simultaneously flat and dimensional, nonfigurative but evocative of animalistic imagery. In its sharp angles and crisp color lines, this painting teems with a tense energy, and excitement, put forth by a young artist on the cusp of innovation.

Aaron Douglas

American, 1898- 1979

Archer

gouache and pencil on illustration board, ca. 1930

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Dubbed "the father of Black American art," Aaron Douglas was born and raised in Topeka, Kansas. He studied art at the University of Nebraska, and worked as an art instructor at a segregated high school in Kansas City, Missouri, before moving to New York in 1925, lured by stories of a cultural resurgence in Harlem. Douglas thrived among Harlem's writers, musicians, artists, and performers, creating works that explored the cultural and social history of African American people. His seductively stylized works embrace the rhythms of both traditional African music and contemporary jazz and capture the energy of Harlem itself.

This painting places an emphasis on mood and tone, and depicts the black man as powerful, capable, and energetic. Douglas, was famous for his murals and paintings, like this one, that combined traditional African motifs with a distinctly modernistic aesthetic. He forged a new visual language, unmistakably his own, to describe the black experience. Throughout his career, Douglas worked to raise the status of African Americans in the arts and helped secure commissions from the Works Progress Administration for black artists in the 1930s. Many of these commissions were for murals in public spaces. This painting is most likely a study for one of his own murals.

Burgoyne Diller

American, 1906- 1965

Early Geometric

oil on canvas, ca. 1934

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Audio

Burgoyne Diller was a pioneer in the advancement of geometric abstraction in the United States. Spending time in Paris in the late 1920s and early 1930s, he visited the city's many galleries, saw the works of leading European modernists, and went on to work and exhibit with them. Diller was influenced by Piet Mondrian's particular brand of conceptual abstraction, termed Neo-Plasticism. This style was defined by a limited yet clear palette and hard-edged geometric forms.

Charles Biederman

American, 1906- 2004

Abstraction

oil on canvas, 1935

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, to Czech immigrant parents, Charles Biederman studied art as a teenager then moved to Illinois in 1926 to attend the Art Institute of Chicago. While there he developed an interest in Cubism, leading to a series of hard-edged semi-abstracted still lifes and landscapes. Though the first years of the Great Depression were especially difficult for Biederman, by 1934, he saved enough money to move to New York. The move coincided with a shift in his style to embrace pure abstractions.

Produced at the start of this stylistic shift, this painting exemplifies Biederman's working philosophy in the mid-1930s. Freedom from any recognizable forms or narrative elements allowed him to experiment with line, shape, and color. *Abstraction* features the rounded, almost sculptural forms that, in their dimensionality, speak to his growing interest in collage and his desire to create a purely visual experience. Biederman would eventually enhance the formal properties evident in *Abstraction* by incorporating three-dimensional elements such as wood and plastic into his work.

Stuart Walker

American, 1904- 1940

Movement

oil on canvas mounted on plywood, ca. 1936-39

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Stuart Walker began his career painting the landscape of the American Southwest in and around his adopted hometown of Albuquerque, New Mexico. With other artists living in the area, Walker began to explore abstraction as a viable means of artistic expression. Walker and his colleagues founded the Transcendental Painting Group, an artist's collective that worked to bring a kind of avant-garde mysticism to abstract painting.

This painting is a fluid network of colors and lines that illustrates Walker's focus on the formalistic attributes of abstraction. Free of overt spiritual connotations, *Movement* speaks purely to aesthetic sensibilities and allows for individual interpretation, which Walker saw as essential to the artistic experience.

Leon Kelly

American, 1901- 1982

Still Life with Pitcher

oil on canvas, 1933

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Audio

Over the course of his long and accomplished career, Leon Kelly experimented with a variety of artistic styles, including Cubism, Social Realism, and Surrealism, while maintaining his interest in the art of the Renaissance and Baroque eras. In 1925, Kelly received a Cresson Traveling Fellowship from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, which allowed him to travel to London, Paris, Switzerland, and Italy. While in Europe, he copied Old Master paintings and also created original compositions.

George Lovett Kingsland Morris

American, 1905- 1975

Composition

oil on canvas, 1941

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Audio

Nicknamed a “Park Avenue Cubist” by his contemporaries because of his privileged upbringing, George L.K. Morris was a founding member of the American Abstract Artists, a collective established in 1937. Its goal was to promote non-representational painting and to rally support in an artistic climate that favored traditional realism. Immediately, Morris emerged as one of the cooperative’s most vital and lucid members. An accomplished writer, he gave the American Abstract Artists a clear and eloquent voice, and his financial resources allowed the group to exhibit their works across the United States.

Balcomb Greene

American, 1904- 1990

The King is Blacker than the Queen

oil on canvas, ca. 1945

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

After studying psychology in Vienna and teaching English literature at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, Balcomb Greene moved to Paris in 1931. Once there, he eagerly absorbed the ideas put forth by modernist artists such as Henri Matisse and Piet Mondrian. Returning to the United States the following year, Greene became an unwavering advocate of abstract art, championing it as a truly international style. He would find an ally in his friend Burgoyne Diller who through his work for the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration, commissioned him.

Greene was the first president of the American Abstract Artists group, founded in 1937 to help give visibility to artists working in a nonrepresentational style. He called for an art that was free of narrative and political content that characterized the work of many American Scene painters of that era. Greene painted *The King is Blacker than the Queen*, using bolder colors and a freer hand than he had previously been known for.

Maurice Freedman

American, 1904- 1985

Avalanche Lake

oil on canvas, 1946

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Maurice Freedman's early interest in art led him to study at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, while still in high school. For a short time after graduation, he attended the Massachusetts Normal School of Art, but in 1926 he moved to New York, believing he could better develop his talent there. Freedman traveled to France twice between 1928 and 1930, where he took classes at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière.

This painting was the most highly praised work in the artist's 1947 solo exhibition. It shows the aftermath of a violent avalanche in the Adirondack Mountains, beneath a wild sky. Art critic Howard Devree called it the best work of his career. Another art critic, Judith Kaye Reed said it was a "well handled picture on a difficult theme." Thick outlines accentuate the mountain pass's steep slopes, which dwarf the broken trees at their bases.

Werner Drewes

American, b. Germany, 1899- 1985

Lighthouse and Gulls

oil on canvas, 1948

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

While studying at Germany's forward-thinking Bauhaus in the late 1920s, Werner Drewes trained under the influential Russian artist Wassily Kandinsky. Almost immediately, Kandinsky became a mentor for Drewes who eagerly absorbed his teacher's ideas on art and design, as well as philosophy. Through years of correspondence, their relationship continued to grow even after Drewes left Germany and immigrated to the United States.

In 1948, years after his initial exposure to Kandinsky's purely abstract approach to painting and four years after Kandinsky's death, Drewes continued to create canvases that improvised on his mentor's teachings. In this painting, he continued to expound on his dynamic version of geometric abstraction, where traditional ideas of form give way to the active nature of shape and form in space. Drewes created this work with bold and bright tones and applied the paint with an increasingly coarse texture.

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William Sommer

American, 1867- 1949

Adam and Eve

oil on board , ca. 1912-15

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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William Sommer was born, raised, and worked in Detroit as a commercial lithographer before accepting a position, in 1907, with the Otis Lithography Company in Cleveland. Almost immediately, he became an influential member of the Cleveland arts scene, an advocate for modern art, and a mentor to younger artists such as Charles Burchfield and William Zorach.

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August Biehle

American, 1885- 1979

Cleveland West Side, Hillside Houses

oil on board, ca. 1914-17

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Cleveland modernist August Biehle trained early on in his hometown before traveling in 1903 and again in 1910 to Munich, where he came under the influence of innovative artists like Wassily Kandinsky, credited with painting the first truly abstract artwork. Upon returning to Cleveland in 1912, he began incorporating elements of Kandinsky's visionary style into his own art. He found and befriended other forward-thinking artists in the Cleveland area, including William Sommer and William Zorach.

Biehle embraced a variety of styles and subjects during his long career, but he was most inspired by abstracting otherwise conventional landscape subjects. In this work he captured the sturdy vitality and simplicity of a working-class neighborhood. In this painting geometric forms make up the houses, the flattened perspective, and the relatively bold palette. As his career progressed, Biehle's distortion of form and bold treatment of light would become even more prevalent in his work.

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William Emile Schumacher

American, b. Belgium, 1870- 1931

Flowers

oil on canvas, 1916

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Born in Belgium, William E. Schumacher came to the United States with his parents while still an infant and spent his childhood in Boston. He returned to Europe in 1888, studying first in Dresden and then in Paris, at the Académie Julian. Schumacher remained in Paris until 1912, when he returned to the United States and established studios in Manhattan and the artist retreat of Woodstock, New York.

In the spring of 1915, Schumacher held an exhibition of twelve recently completed flower paintings. A critic for *American Art News* noted that the group “shows a marked advance in this painter’s work over his exhibition of last year when he displayed figure pieces and portraits.” Schumacher’s style, the writer continued, “lends itself with greater advantage to flowers, in which it produces a decorative and scintillating effect.” Perhaps encouraged by the positive notice, Schumacher produced this painting, *Flowers*, as well as works depicting other floral subjects the very next year. His style became increasingly simplified and modern, without abandoning the decorative quality critics admired.

William Sommer

American, 1867- 1949

Blue Dairy Cart

oil on board, 1917-18

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Though William Sommer earned his livelihood as a commercial lithographer, he found it a dissatisfying use of time that would have been better-spent making fine art. He grew to resent, even detest, his job and occasionally disappeared for days at a time on drinking binges. When he was able to devote time to painting for himself, he channeled his intensity into his works, which rely more on emotional experiences than on clear storytelling.

By the time Sommer produced *Blue Dairy Cart* in 1918, he had firmly established himself as a radical, avant-garde artist. However, it was during this year that he returned to a slightly more narrative style in his paintings. Left unexplained by the artist, *Blue Dairy Cart* relies heavily on personal interpretation and imagination, which as an artist, Sommer saw as fundamental to the visual experience. The bold, rich colors and rapid brushwork, in this painting, come together to construct an emotive composition.

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Marsden Hartley

American, 1877- 1943

The Seashell

oil on board, 1929

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

Few artists reinvented their professional personas and aesthetic priorities as frequently or as successfully as Marsden Hartley. Hartley became a devoted still life painter in the 1920s, arranging objects – ordinary things a traveler encounters – on sturdy hotel tables. In the 1930s, he spent more and more time in his native New England, painting the majestic landscapes of the White Mountains and the craggy rocks in Massachusetts, as well as the dramatic Maine shoreline. As American Scene painting flourished during the Great Depression, Hartley recast himself once again, this time as a quintessential New England Regionalist. By his death in 1943, he was one of the most highly regarded artists of his age.

In December 1928, he began a series of seashell still life paintings, a project that occupied him through the next year. *The Seashell* depicts a mossy green whelk or conch that he may have found on the beaches of Maine, during the previous summer. The shell sits alone tucked into the folds of a pink cloth that appeared repeatedly in his still lifes that winter.

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Luois Ribak

Lithuanian/American, 1902 1979

Nocturne

oil on canvas, ca. 1937

Collection of John and Susan Horseman

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Directed by Mary Lance

Artists at Work: A Film on the New Deal Art Projects

Video (35 minutes), 1981

When President Franklin D. Roosevelt took office in 1933 during the Great Depression, nearly 10,000 artists were out of work. Under the WPA and other programs, thousands of artists were able to earn a living while devoting themselves full-time to their art. *Artists at Work* focuses on the visual arts programs of the New Deal, highlighting the impact on the lives and work of American artists. Interviews with artists employed by the WPA are included, along with archival film, photographs, sound recordings, and original color photography of the works of art.