



## HAWTHORNE Fine Art

### **RUTH ALICE ANDERSON (December 19, 1891 – June 22, 1957)**

A.K.A. “R. A. Anderson,” “Ruth A. Anderson,” “Ruth Anderson Temple”

Landscape, seascape, still life and portrait painter in oil. Anderson – whose career spanned nearly fifty years – is best remembered as one of the most outstanding and extensively exhibited women painters of the first half of the twentieth century. As one of her early biographers noted: “*She painted the most ordinary scenes with startling strokes of color.*”

Ruth Alice Anderson was born in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, the daughter of Alice Groome (1859 – 1921) and William T. Anderson (1859 – 1929). Her father had a successful grocery store in Carlisle. The family moved to Baltimore when she was a young child and Anderson’s original studies occurred there at the Maryland Institute in 1902 beginning at the age of eleven. By 1905 the family had moved to Arlington, Pennsylvania, where they resided at the corner of Laurel and Oakley Avenue. That year she began her studies at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts under Cecilia Beaux (1855 – 1942) and William Merritt Chase (1849 – 1916). In 1906 she studied with Thomas Pollock Anschutz (1851 – 1912), Director of the School, and Hugh H. Breckenridge (1870 – 1937).

She enrolled in the boarding school at the West Chester State Normal School (later West Chester State College) in 1906 where she began extensive studies in 1907 with her aunt, Esther M. Groome (1859 – 1929) who over saw the school’s burgeoning art department. Ruth Anderson graduated in 1908, and in celebration her fellow student, Martha Cornwall, sculpted her in profile. Anderson returned to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 1909 to study further and continued there from 1910 through 1912 under the tutelage of Anschutz, Beaux and Breckenridge and her new instructors, Emil Carlsen (1848/53 – 1932) and J. Alden Weir (1852 – 1919).

It was in 1912 that Anderson exhibited some of her works at the West Chester Art Exhibition held at the West Chester State Normal School. That same year she was chosen by the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts to receive one of their prestigious Cresson Traveling Fellowships. The award would allow her to travel to Europe to study there more in depth. Newspaper articles which announced her achievement also noted that members of the Academy thought so highly of the quality of her works that they sent one of her paintings for exhibition in Dresden, Germany (a still life oil).

Along with fellow students and her instructor, William Merritt Chase, she traveled to Europe and North Africa, sketching and recording the local scenery. Among her many stops were visits to Amsterdam, Bruges, Brussels, Florence, London, Madrid, Paris, Tangiers, Tunis and Venice. Following her return her works were exhibited in 1913 at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and at the Charcoal Club of Baltimore at the Peabody Gallery, where the jurors were Daniel Garber (1880 – 1958), William W. Gilchrist Jr. (1879 – 1926) and J. Alden Weir. Her recent paintings were also shown that year in the



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contemporary painting exhibition at the Peabody Galleries in Baltimore, where reviewers noted. *“Ruth Anderson has a picture called ‘Study,’ which is not especially successful, although an outdoor scene of hers, which hangs opposite, is one of the most charming pictures in the entire group.”* Two of her works shown at the Peabody included *“A Study of the Head”* and *“A Street Scene in Bruges.”*

Later that year she departed for Venice *“to resume her studies in Europe and North Africa”* with her teacher, William Merritt Chase. In October of 1913 she returned to the United States, having studied and painted again in Venice as well as in nearby Lido, Greece, Tunis, Sidi-bon-Said and Constantine (Algiers). Chase presented Anderson with an original painting of his own creation to honor her for *“doing the best in the class during the trip.”* Anderson gave an interview from her parents’ house to *The Baltimore Sun* in October of 1913 where she remarked that Venice, where much time was spent by the group, was a place that: *“A painter could stay in Venice for years... and never be at a loss for a subject. One could have painted at least 20 scenes from the door of the hotel where we were staying.”*

The popularity of Anderson’s works was growing, and exhibitions began to feature her paintings on a very regular basis. This culminated in 1914 with the honor of a solo exhibition at the W. E. Jones Gallery in Baltimore. The exhibition featured 44 paintings created during her trip to Europe. Reviewers took note of their quality: *“...they are marked by a fine originality of expression and a picturesque breadth that belongs primarily to younger painters. Miss Anderson has a most agreeable color sense, and her work is all the more noteworthy because of its fine directness”* and *“There is a quality about this daring and rather impressionistic work of this young Baltimore girl... which explains why she was awarded last year the first prize at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.”* At the tail end of the year, she received a two-person exhibition, with Emilie Hergenroeder (1858 – 1925), at the Peabody Galleries. Anderson showed a variety of oils, including marines, a self-portrait, and European works and landscape sketches.

At this time, she was living and working alongside her aunt, who in fact had an exhibition at the Peabody galleries alongside her niece’s show in 1914. Her Baltimore studio was described by a local reporter at that time:

*“Her studio might easily form the subject for one of those still-life pictures that she so loves to do. It is rather barren, containing only, in addition to the sofa, an easel, several chairs of various designs and a little table on which reposes a brass tea kettle, bowl of apples and a tin of conserved ginger. The walls are hung with colorful Old-World posters and two wonderfully embroidered Moorish draperies. ‘I got them in Tunis,’ she said, speaking of the latter, ‘where I would love to live and have my studio, but failing that I am quite content with Baltimore.’ ”*

The year 1915 was an even busier one for exhibitions. Anderson’s paintings were shown at the Arlington Galleries in New York City; in March at the Flower House Studio, Baltimore, with other local artists; in April in another solo exhibition at W. E. Jones Gallery, where a number of portraits were included, but



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only for a short run of just six days. A reviewer reported: “*The work has real individuality, a good deal of strength and as color studies they are exceptionally interesting... As these canvases are to be on view such a very short time, I should advise you to go see them early in the week.*” Anderson also exhibited in the 5<sup>th</sup> annual painting and sculpture exhibition in West Chester, organized by her aunt, Esther Groome, and at the Baltimore Artists Exhibition in Williamsport, Massachusetts, where it was observed: “*Ruth A. Anderson’s ‘Pastoral’ is a delightfully imagined bit of modern work...*” That summer she studied with Jonas Lie (1880 – 1940) at his summer art school located in Belle Terre, just outside of Port Jefferson, Long Island, New York. All in all, a very busy year.

Anderson returned on a more permanent basis to Baltimore in 1916, where she again took up exhibiting with the Charcoal Club at the Peabody Galleries. Reviewers again favored her works: “*Ruth A. Anderson has caught the spirit of a little imp in the boy portrait ‘Good Morning’...*” Though she had resided on West Louthier Street and had a studio on Biddle Street previously, in 1916 she moved her home and studio to 411 North Charles Street. That November she again participated in a group exhibition at the Peabody Galleries and her work appeared for the first time in the noted art periodical, *International Studio*.

She continued to exhibit with the Charcoal Club at the Peabody Galleries in 1917 and that April her works were shown at two locations in her hometown of Carlisle, Pennsylvania. First at Kauffman’s Chocolate Shop and at Kronenberg’s Clothing Store. These stores featured a number of Anderson’s works, including “*several portraits and landscape studies.*” For the summer, a break from her crazy exhibition schedule was required, and so she joined her aunt at Gloucester, Massachusetts, where the two women sketched and painted. So enjoyable was the trip, local newspapers announced that the two artists planned to travel next to Chester Springs, Pennsylvania. In September Anderson participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual exhibition of the North Shore Art Association at the Gallery on the Moors in East Gloucester, Massachusetts. Over time her work would become a regular feature of their exhibitions. In November of 1917 she was back exhibiting at the Peabody Galleries in Baltimore, in a three person show alongside Camelia Whitehurst (1871 – 1936) and Joseph L. Weyrich. Reviewers noted: “*...those [paintings] of Miss Anderson, which occupy by far the larger section of the guest wall, [have] a particular vitality... and there are a number of lovely sketches.*” She also exhibited that year both at the Baltimore Museum of Art and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. At some point she also traveled to New York City to paint that year, though it is unclear exactly when and for how long. This would be one of only a few trips to that city during this period.

Again 1918 saw her back in Baltimore exhibiting with the Charcoal Club. As part of the war effort, she joined other local artists in designing war posters which were auctioned in February at the Baltimore Academy of Music to benefit the war work of the Vacation Lodge organization. That March she returned to New York City for the second time to paint, and took some time to visit with her colleague, Cecelia Beaux, joining her and others for a tea party at the latter’s studio. In May a momentous event occurred when she married Samuel B. Temple (1892 – 1958), a dashing naval officer who had attended Harvard.



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The year was also flooded with exhibitions that featured her work. One of her paintings was shown at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts as part of the honor canvas program, as was recorded in local newspapers: *“The honor canvas occupies a position in the exhibition with a number of young Americans who are making marks for themselves, among those being: Ruth A. Anderson...”* She also joined other women artists in showing at the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors exhibition, where her works were again well-liked: *“...we cannot help but admire the swift, sure painting and solidity of the forms [in her painting]. It reminds one of Richard Miller’s early work.”* Additional exhibits that included her works were held at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.; at Casson Galleries in Boston, Massachusetts (two shows, summer and autumn); the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; at the Macbeth Gallery in New York City; the Southeastern Fair Art Exhibition in Atlanta, Georgia and at the 3rd annual exhibition of the North Shore Art Association at the Gallery on the Moors in East Gloucester, Massachusetts. Reviewers commented on her submissions to the Gloucester exhibition: *“... [the] wall is made handsome by Ruth Anderson’s two oils, ‘The Return,’ ships dipping in Gloucester Harbor, and ‘Wartime,’ a study of flags in sunlight. Ruth Anderson, who is a Baltimore girl, studied art at the Pennsylvania Academy and at Fort Washington and has matured into a painter with much originality.”*

Following the conclusion of World War I in 1919, Anderson and her new husband decided to settle in Boston. Early in the year her paintings of a wartime New York City were featured in an exhibition at the Peabody Galleries in Baltimore alongside those by five of the six women painters known as the *“The Baltimore Six”* (Ruth A. Anderson, Alice Worthington Ball, Maud Drein Bryant, Josephine G. Cochrane, Mary Kremelberg and Camelia Whitehurst). Reviewers commented specifically on Anderson’s paintings depicting New York City:

*“Ruth A. Anderson is represented by but three major canvases, although she has a number of effective thumb-box sketches, notably one of some poplars; one of the Washington Square Arch in New York and one of some clouds, that are very lovely in coloring and full of atmospheric suggestion, of the larger pieces the most successful – and it is very successful – is the ‘Upper Fifth Avenue’ impression, a view of the picturesque ‘Flower House,’ with flags flying and crowds surging...”* A further reviewer summed up the exhibition simply: *“I should advise you to go and see [the paintings].”*

That year her paintings were also shown in the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors exhibition, where her portraits were noted as being part of the *“capitally clever things in this field.”* She also showed at the private exhibition of the Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts exhibition in Philadelphia, where a New York City oil drew attention: *“Another painting that reflects modernism is Miss Ruth A. Anderson’s ‘Downtown in New York.’”* Anderson was also the recipient of a solo exhibition at Vose Galleries in her new hometown of Boston and had her work included in an exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, where her New York City painting *“Twilight, Lincoln Square”* was featured.



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Anderson and her husband settled into their permanent home in Boston in 1920, selecting number 53 Charles Street in the Beacon Hill neighborhood. That year, her works were again selected for inclusion at several of the major art institutions in America, including at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and at the prestigious Carnegie International in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. During the summer she was again an exhibitor at the North Shore Art Association's exhibition in East Gloucester, where reviewers noted: "*'The Cabbage Patch,' by Ruth A. Anderson, is wonderfully well handled.*" Her portrait study of a young street urchin "*Sally in our Alley*" was shown that year at the Boston Art Club, where it was very favorably reviewed: "*Miss Anderson while painting in Philadelphia, picked this little girl from the street and rapidly painted her in an unconventional pose. This is one of the live and forceful paintings taken from the current New England painters' show.*"

The following year (1921) her work was shown again at Macbeth Gallery, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors annual exhibition. That summer her paintings were featured in an exhibition at the Grace Horne Gallery in East Gloucester, Massachusetts. Her portrait of a young boy included in the exhibition was called: "*...fine in character and freely painted.*" In 1922 she exhibited an astonishing three times with the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors. First in their exhibition and auction conducted by Anderson Galleries at the Architectural League of New York to benefit the group, then in the spring and again in the autumn, where her painting "*Blue and Gold*" received an honorable mention, with one reviewer commenting that the work was one "*of the notable ones*" in the exhibition.

That May she exhibited in Baltimore with the Friends of Art. A reviewer noted, quite gushingly: "*One thing that is curiously stimulating artistic expression here... is ... a sumptuous flower piece by Ruth Anderson Temple... It is a particularly stunning canvas, highly individualistic in treatment and extremely beautiful and rich in tone... It is a kind of technical tour de force. Mrs. Temple (who is now living in Boston, where she is doubtless making the 'Boston School' painters gasp for breath), has just accepted the chairmanship of the annual jury of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors.*" That June she exhibited in the Charles Street Window Art Exhibition in Baltimore and during the latter summer she painted in Gloucester with Cecelia Beaux and established a studio in Reed's Barn in East Gloucester. She also showed her work, a portrait, that summer in the North Shore Art Association's annual exhibition.

At the beginning of 1923 Anderson was again showing at Macbeth Gallery in New York City alongside fellow artist Elizabeth C. Spencer, where her two child portraits "*The Imp*" and "*Her Highness*" were shown. Later that year, at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts annual exhibition, which one reviewer called disappointing ("*it left me cold*") but who also remarked that: "*There is a very notable group of flower and still-life painting. The younger generation is devoted to this form of expression, and this group of paintings unquestionably has the highest place in the exhibition. There are noteworthy*





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*examples by Leslie Thompson, Ruth Anderson, Gerald Frank...* Several additional exhibitions followed throughout the year all organized under the auspices of the American Federation of Arts, including one with the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors at the Hillyer Art Gallery in Northampton, Massachusetts, and then another at the Iris Club in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The year concluded with Anderson's works being included in exhibitions at the Philadelphia Art Club in a group show with several other Baltimore women painters and at the Maryland Institute Galleries in Baltimore, under the auspices of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors.

Anderson's works began 1924 in an exhibition in her hometown of Carlisle, where they were featured in an exhibition at the Bosler Library. Local reviewers were impressed by her portraits: “*The Red Cloak, 'a portrait by Ruth Anderson (Mrs. Samuel Temple) is also of much interest to Carlisle. Mrs. Temple has just been selected by Director Leatty as one of sixty American Women Painters who are to exhibit at an International Exhibition in Vienna next summer. This is considered a very great honor and places the stamp of approval upon the work of Mrs. Temple.*” The Vienna exhibition mentioned above was apparently the International Art Exhibition organized by the Society for the Promotion of Modern Art in Vienna, Austria, which occurred from September 11 through October 20, 1924. Anderson also exhibited that year with the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Baltimore Museum of Art and at the Art Club of Philadelphia. There, three of her oil paintings were quickly sold to private collectors, and a reviewer remarked: “*Ruth Anderson has painted flowers with great freedom of line...*”

It was during the summer of 1924 that she and her husband acquired the historic Strawbridge House. Originally erected in Canton, Massachusetts c. 1700, the Temples dismantled it and moved the house to Eastern Point near Gloucester, Massachusetts. The Strawbridge House became their summer home for many years.

Anderson's works were included for exhibition back in her former hometown of Baltimore in 1925 as part of a show of the “Six in One” women artist's group at the Maryland Institute Galleries. Then her work was shown in The Carlisle Art Exhibit, organized by her aunt under the auspices of the Civic Club of Carlisle, Pennsylvania. An article noted that her works had been acquired by museums “*in different countries,*” though exactly which ones remains unknown. Another reviewer remarked: “*Among the paintings are some real gems [including]: Priscilla and Edward, two most adorable children; and Columbus Circle, New York, both paintings are by Ruth Anderson Temple...*” The portrait *Priscilla and Edward* was purchased by subscription to become part of the permanent collection in Carlisle at the Bosler Library. That summer Anderson exhibited at the North Shore Art Association in Gloucester where it was noted: “*‘From a Gloucester Garden’ by Ruth A. Anderson is a splendid bit of painting.*” Additionally, that year her paintings were featured in exhibitions held at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors and the Boston Guild of Artists.



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Chicago became a focus for Anderson in 1926, when her works were selected for a solo exhibition at the galleries of the famous department store, Carson, Pirie, Scott, with one of her still life oils selected for illustration in the *Chicago Evening Post*. Anderson again exhibited at the “Six in One” group show at the Maryland Institute Galleries in Baltimore and at the Corcoran Gallery of Art and Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. She also exhibited in the South Florida Fair Art Exhibition, which took place in Tampa, Florida. A local art reviewer noted that: “*Among the other exhibitors are... Ruth A. Anderson showing delightfully colorful flowers and child portraits...*”

Her exhibition at Carson, Pirie, Scott was so successful in 1926 that another solo was held at the department store in 1927. This was followed with exhibitions that featured her paintings at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and the North Shore Arts Association in Gloucester, where she showed “*Gold Luster and Flowers,*” which was called “*...rich in color and well composed.*” That autumn she exhibited with the Guild of Boston Artists, where her child’s portrait was remarked as being “*...one of the gems of the exhibition.*”

In 1928, Anderson’s works traveled to the deep south, where they were included in the art exhibition featuring New York artists at the Memorial Auditorium in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Organized by her aunt, Anderson’s work again elicited a positive reception: “*Ruth A. Anderson’s three small flower studies are equally beautiful in color and pattern.*” From there her works traveled on to another exhibition at the Centennial Club in Nashville, Tennessee. During the course of the year Anderson’s paintings were also shown with the Guild of Boston Artists, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and in the American Women Artists Exhibition at the Boston Art Club. There, her portrait of Katherine Baker was noted as being: “*... a perfect harmony in color, well posed and full of character.*” The painting featured at the Pennsylvania Academy was illustrated in the *American Magazine of Art* (March 1928).

In addition to her regular inclusion at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and the North Shore Art Association, in 1929 Anderson exhibited her works at the Boston Art Club in their flower paintings and garden sculpture exhibition and in The Carlisle Art Exhibit held at Dickinson College in Pennsylvania. That November her aunt, Esther Groome, died and left Anderson \$10,000 in her will if she would stop smoking. Anderson informed the court that she would not cease smoking, something that would come back to haunt her later in life. That December a picture of Anderson at her easel was featured in the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*. Once again, her work was illustrated in the *American Magazine of Art* (October 1929).

In the beginning of 1930 Anderson contributed her works to an exhibition at the Boston Art Club, where her child portrait “*Rechelle*” was remarked as being “*...a fine bit of childhood characterization.*” She also showed her paintings in the Society of Washington Artists exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery of Art where local reviewers noted: “*...a very charming portrait of a little girl, ‘Fine Feathers,’ [is] by Ruth A. Anderson, one of the non-resident members of the Society. It is a painting which will hold its own in any*



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*collection.*” During the late spring she exhibited at the St. Botolph Club in Boston in an exhibition of contemporary American painters and at the Boston Tercentenary Fine Arts and Crafts Exhibition in the “*Hall of Paintings.*” Then it was back to Gloucester for the North Shore Art Association’s annual exhibition where Anderson’s painting of a young girl received attention: “*On the right wall hangs a portrait of a little girl – ‘The Lavender Dress,’ by Ruth A. Anderson. It is fine in pose and character.*” The portrait won her the Association’s Milton Davis Portrait Prize. Her portraits of children, which continued to garner praise, with one being exhibited in a show at the Quincy Art League in Quincy, Massachusetts, where reviewers commented: “*There is a splendid child portrait by Ruth Anderson.*” That year her paintings were also exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Anderson also traveled south during the year to Chattanooga, Tennessee, where she painted half a dozen portraits (probably on commission).

Anderson’s paintings were exhibited in 1931 in an exhibition organized by the David Strawn Art Home in Jacksonville, Illinois, home of The Art Association of Jacksonville. That year she was also selected for inclusion in the American painters exhibition organized by the Harrisburg Art Association in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, which was organized through the American Federation of Arts. Her submission, a still life titled “*Lowestoft and Flowers,*” was noted as being “*a painting of lovely color tone.*” It was then onto to Massachusetts, where she participated in the Jordan Marsh Contemporary Artists of New England exhibition. Local reviewers were impressed by her submission: “*The portrait of Thomas Temple Pond Jr, by Ruth Anderson, is an excellent example of child portraiture.*” She also exhibited her work that year at the Fitchburg Art Center in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. At the end of the year, in November, she was given a major solo exhibition of her floral paintings and child portraits at the Guild of Boston Artists. Again, they received praise, with reviewers noting: “*...artistic refinement has gone into each kind of picture... It is the ability to catch the subtle qualities of child character which has made Ruth Anderson famous all over the country.*”

As the depression began to take a firmer grip, Anderson’s exhibition schedule in 1932 was diminished. While she showed her works at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia, where one of her portraits was illustrated in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, additional exhibitions in which she showed that year was limited to the Guild of Boston Artists. The following year, she was again included in the Jordan Marsh Contemporary Artists of New England exhibition. In the summer of 1933, her paintings were exhibited at Vose Galleries in Boston and at the North Shore Art Association in Gloucester, where her painting “*Flowers*” was noted as being “*...a beauty in color and design.*”

Anderson’s schedule of exhibitions picked up in 1934, with shows at the Boston Art Club and the North Shore Art Association in Gloucester. Her works were also given a place farther south in the Chattanooga Art Exhibition, which was held at the University of Chattanooga under the auspices of the Chattanooga Art Association. That November Anderson’s works returned to the walls of the Guild of Boston Artists exhibition held at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.





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Anderson, who along with her husband were enthusiastic travelers, began extensive holidays in Mexico in 1935, where she would enjoy depicting the rich scenery she encountered. This did not stop her from exhibiting at her usual haunts, and over the summer she again showed with the North Shore Arts Association annual exhibition. Her painting “*Galatea*” was noted as being “...*a vital bit of painting.*” A return to the annual contemporary artist exhibition held at Jordan Marsh & Company in Boston in 1936 found her painting of Dianne Bowman remarked as being “*a gem.*” Then it was on to the Guild of Boston Artists, where she exhibited “...*a splendid child portrait.*” Anderson also returned to Mexico again in 1936 for another season of painting.

The Temples decided to expand their real estate holdings in 1937, purchasing a property in Falmouth, Massachusetts known as “*Deep Pond.*” Her husband began the restoration of the house while also constructing his wife a brand-new painting studio on the property. *The Falmouth Enterprise* described his new creation:

*“The interior is supported by heavy weatherbeaten old beams, which were salvaged from a schooner that sank before the war of Scituate. The boards are well weatherbeaten, and are covered three quarters of the way to the ceiling by grooved plywood painted white which makes an interesting and practical background for the paintings Mrs. Temple has hung there. The most prominent and pleasing feature is the great north window, four feet by six, a single piece of thick plate glass that lights the entire studio and casts a perfect light upon Mrs. Temple’s easel.”*

The article continued with a discussion of how Anderson painted: “*She works with her back at an angle to the great window, so that the painting is reflected in a six foot mirror placed in the corner behind her. Thus she can see the painting reflected as the light hits it.*” Anderson also exhibited that year, this time again at The Art Center in Fitchburg, Massachusetts.

In 1938 Anderson again found herself busy again with exhibitions featuring her paintings. In the spring she showed in the annual contemporary artist exhibition held at Jordan Marsh & Company in Boston, where her portrait of a child was described by reviewers as “*lifelike.*” She also returned to the summer exhibition at the North Shore Art Association. The following year, in a project that was several years in the making, she opened a solo exhibition of her Mexican oils at the Guild of Boston Artists, which was a break from her famous child portraits. Reviewers took note: “*Mexico did something... ..to Ruth Anderson – it broadened and deepened her artistic vision and gave her an assurance and freedom in painting that is remarkable.*” An article further remarked that the individual frames that housed each painting were made by Mexican craftsmen out of wood and metal.

Even though World War II had broken out in Europe, the Andersons began what would eventually become regular travel to Europe in 1940, spending time in Spain, Paris and the surrounding French



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countryside until almost the beginning of the German invasion. Following the war, they would return each spring to Spain and France to holiday and to paint. Anderson would also continue to exhibit her work during the war years, though on a more limited basis. In 1941 she showed her paintings in a local exhibition in Falmouth, Massachusetts and in the spring of 1944, she submitted her work for exhibition at the Guild of Boston Artists. In 1949 the Temples expanded their property at “*Deep Pond*,” acquiring an additional twenty-two acres.

The following year, in 1950, Anderson exhibited her works in her final, known exhibitions. First at the Guild of Boston Artists, where her floral still life was noted as being a “...*a bright, free affair*,” and in the autumn at the Boston Symphony member’s art exhibition. At that point Anderson had to cease painting, her years of smoking having caused retinal deterioration and the early onset of arteriosclerosis. By 1956 she had become completely blind.

Ruth Alice Anderson died on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 1957 in Barnstable, Massachusetts at the age of sixty-five years. She was buried in the Canton Corner Cemetery in Canton, Massachusetts. A little less than a year later her husband was killed in an automobile accident in Bordeaux, France and he joined her in Canton (there is a reference to her being moved in 1969 to a cemetery in Washington, D.C., to be closer to his grave, but that story appears to be apocryphal, as their marked graves are plainly evident in Canton, though the reverse could be true, that he was later moved to join her in Canton).

There are few artists who during their own lifetime received such praise for their work and who consistently exhibited across their entire careers as did Ruth Anderson. From her first exhibitions in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to her last in the middle of the twentieth century, her works were routinely accepted to major and minor exhibitions and were equally popular with private collectors and the public alike. Ruth Farr, one of the principals at The Dent Collection where Anderson’s second retrospective was held, remarked in her short biographical essay that unlike members of the Ashcan group, with whom she had been a student:

*“Ruth Anderson tended to keep her distance from social debates and political causes, feeling that art was beyond social propaganda. Instead, she became a highly disciplined painter whose work reveals an individuality... [and] whose strongest influence was certainly exerted by William Merritt Chase...”*

Anderson herself commented personally upon what she learned from Chase in a later interview published in *The Baltimore Sun* during the winter of 1916: *“Only the technical difficulties can be learned in the art schools’ ... The rest must come from the artist from inspiration. That is where Chase excels as a teacher; he fills his pupils with a wonderful inspiration; he makes them want to paint.”*

Her studies in Europe also introduced her to the work of Franz Hals, whose: *“...studied spontaneity and intimacy... made an indelible impression on Anderson, and their effect can be clearly seen in many of her portraits.”* Anderson became particular renowned for her portraits of children, which were not too



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dissimilar to the portraits being created by her former classmate, Robert Henri, who had also been influenced by Hals. The same spontaneity can clearly be seen in her other works, including her city scenes. Whether it is her views of Beacon Hill in Boston during the winter, or her wartime period oils done in New York City, the quickness and deftness of her brush is evident. As Farr put it: “*She painted the most ordinary scenes with startling strokes of color.*”

But what was considered ordinary had often been the dominion of male artists, and not women, who were expected to be content painting pretty still-lives, bucolic landscapes or cute portraits, anything but the hustle and bustle of real life – whether that be in a dockyard near Gloucester or along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue in New York City. Claude Monet and later Childe Hassam had been praised for their nearly identical, celebratory scenes of city life. But it was Anderson, as Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Knocklin noted in their landmark book, *Women Artists: 1550 – 1950* (1976), who demonstrated “...*another dimension of her ability by successfully treating subjects theretofore reserved for men.*”

But Chase and Hals were not her only strong influence. The paintings of Hugh Breckenridge hint at what Anderson learned from him, an impressionistic technique which gave her paintings a longevity that was not always achieved by other artists who found themselves overwhelmed by the beginnings of modernism, which Breckenridge actually embraced. This mixture of the two is particularly noticeable in her use of black pigment paired with ultra-saturated colors, which give her work, as Farr noted, “...*almost photographic contrasts between dark and light.*” Even though they come out of the post-impressionist tradition, Anderson’s paintings still feel modern today – even though many of them are now a century old.

And Ruth Anderson was modern. Even after she married in May of 1918, it was clear that she was not about to give up her painting career, nor take her husband’s name professionally, instead continuing to use her maiden name for all aspects of her art career. When asked: “*Do you think that matrimony has a settling effect on a woman’s career?*,” she replied without any hesitation “*I see no good reason why it ought to...*” In fact, her relationship with her husband, Samuel, would be a partnership. They traveled together all over the world, worked out of the same house together, saved and restored old house together and spent their lives together. She was also, along with her husband, one of the founders of the North Shore Art Association in Gloucester.

As Farr again pointed out, as time progressed a new strong influence overtook Anderson’s work, that of Paul Cezanne. His use of extraordinary color massing and blue outlining in the creation of his compositions can be seen clearly in Anderson’s views of Gloucester and Mexico, the latter of which she began to visit in the early 1930s. Her affinity for still life work had been evident early in her career, though during the long summers in New England, they took on an even stronger interest, with one being featured in her very last known public exhibition in 1950.



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Following her death in 1957, the majority of her paintings disappeared for almost fifteen years. Then in 1972, the first major retrospective of Anderson's paintings was organized by Adams, Davidson Galleries in Washington, D.C. The exhibition then moved onto the Danville Community College Library under the auspices of the Danville Chapter of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. A second, more comprehensive retrospective was held in Washington, D.C. in 1982 at The Dent Collection, organized by Joyce and Harry Farr, who assembled a collection of sixty works – the largest ever brought together in a single exhibition. The Farris also published the first and only catalog on Anderson to accompany their exhibition.

There are several websites and publications which report that during the Great Depression Anderson's studio on Charles Street in Boston was destroyed or damaged by fire, an event which would have wiped out a great of her output up until that time. However, this fire does appear in her *Who Was Who in American Art* entry or in the Farr's 1982 catalog on the artist, nor is it evident in the regional newspapers and publications which would have almost certainly recorded such a calamity. The source of this information is not known at present, and it remains uncorroborated. That said, it would help explain the paucity of her works on the market.

Ruth Anderson was a member of the Boston Guild of Artists, Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors, North Shore Art Association, The Plastic Club, Washington Society of Artists. Among her students was the soprano and artist, Elizabeth Gutman. Her works are most often signed "*Ruth A. Anderson*," however there are also a limited number of examples signed "*R.A. Anderson*" and "*Ruth Anderson Temple*."

Though there are undoubtedly other exhibitions in which Anderson participated, those presently known include the following: West Chester Art Exhibition, West Chester, PA, 1912, 1915; Art Exhibition, Dresden, Germany 1912; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA, 1913 (solo, prize), 1917, 1918 (Twice, Honors Exhibition & Annual); 1919 (Fellowship Exhibition), 1920-30, 1932; Charcoal Club at the Peabody Galleries, Baltimore, MD, 1913, 1916-18; Contemporary Art Exhibition at the Peabody Galleries, Baltimore, MD, 1913; 1916-17, 1918 (The Baltimore Six Exhibition); W. E. Jones Gallery, Baltimore, MD, 1914 (solo); 1915 (solo); Two artist exhibition (w. Emilie Hergenroeder) at the Peabody Galleries, Baltimore, MD, 1914; Arlington Galleries, New York, NY, 1915; Flower House Studio, Baltimore, MD, 1915; Baltimore Artists Exhibition, Williamsport, MA, 1915; National Academy of Design, New York, NY, 1917-20, 1923; Kauffman's Chocolate Shop, Carlisle, PA, 1917 (solo); Kronenberg's Clothing Store, Carlisle, PA, 1917 (solo); North Shore Art Association, Gallery on the Moors, East Gloucester, MA, 1917-18, 1920, 1922, 1925, 1927, 1929, 1930 (prize), 1931 (prize), 1933-36, 1938; Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, PA, 1917, 1924; Vacation Lodge Benefit, Baltimore Academy of Music, Baltimore, MD, 1918; National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors, New York, NY, 1918-19, 1922 (three times), 1924-25; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, 1918-20, 1926; Casson Galleries, Boston, MA, 1918 (twice, spring & autumn); Macbeth Gallery, New York, NY, 1918, 1921, 1923; Southeastern Fair Art Exhibition, Atlanta, GA, 1918; Vose Galleries, Boston, MA,



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1919 (solo), 1933; Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL, 1920-22; Carnegie International, Pittsburgh, PA, 1920; Boston Art Club, Boston, MA, 1920, 1928 (Women Artists Exhibition), 1929-30, 1934; Grace Horne Gallery, East Gloucester, MA, 1921; Friends of Art Exhibition, Baltimore, MD, 1922; Charles Street Window Exhibition, Baltimore, MD, 1922; AFA Exhibition at the Hillyer Art Gallery, Northampton, MA, 1923; AFA Exhibition at the Iris Club, Lancaster, PA, 1923; Art Club of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA, 1923-24; Maryland Institute Galleries, Baltimore, MD, 1923, 1925 (Six in One Exhibition), 1926 (Six in One Exhibition); Bosler Library Exhibition, Carlisle, PA, 1924 (solo); International Art Exhibition, Vienna, Austria, 1924; The Carlisle Art Exhibit, Carlisle, PA, 1925, 1929 (at Dickinson College); The Guild of Boston Artists, Boston, MA, 1925, 1927-28, 1931 (solo), 1932, 1934 (at the BMFA), 1936, 1938 (solo), 1944, 1950; Carson, Pirie, Scott Exhibition, Chicago, IL, 1926 (solo), 1927 (solo); South Florida Fair Art Exhibition, Tampa, FL, 1926; Memorial Auditorium Exhibition, Chattanooga, TN, 1928; Centennial Club, Nashville, TN, 1928; Society of Washington Artists, Washington, DC, 1930; St. Botolph Club, Boston, MA, 1930; Boston Tercentenary Fine Arts and Crafts Exhibition, Boston, MA, 1930; Quincy Art League, Quincy, MA, 1930; David Strawn Art Home, Jacksonville, IL, 1931; AFA Exhibition at the Harrisburg Art Association, Harrisburg, PA, 1931; Jordan Marsh Contemporary Artists of New England Exhibition, Boston, MA, 1931, 1933, 1936, 1938; Fitchburg Art Center, Fitchburg, MA, 1931, 1937; Chattanooga Art Exhibition, Chattanooga, TN, 1934; Falmouth Art Exhibition, Falmouth, MA, 1941; Boston Symphony Member's Art Exhibition, Boston, MA, 1950. Since her death the following major exhibitions featuring her works are known to have occurred: Adams, Davidson Galleries, Washington, DC, 1972 (1<sup>st</sup> retrospective); Danville Community College Library, Danville, VA, 1972 (1<sup>st</sup> retrospective); The Dent Collection, Washington, DC, 1982 (2<sup>nd</sup> retrospective); Art in Embassies Program, U. S. Department of State, (Present Day).

Anderson's works are held in the collection of the following public institutions: Bosler Library, Carlisle, PA; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA; U. S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. Her works also reside in private collections throughout the United States.

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Sourced from Askart.com