

HAWTHORNE FINE ART ANNOUNCES “LEAVES OF BEAUTY: WORKS OF ART ON PAPER (1850-1950)”

February 2018, New York, NY — Hawthorne Fine Art is pleased to announce a new exhibition of drawings entitled “Leaves of Beauty: Works of Art on Paper (1850-1950).” Works of art on paper, which first came to prominence in the early years of the fifteenth century through the rise in use of silverpoint ink, emerged as a mature genre in the Americas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. No longer an extension of the preparatory process, drawings became an independent art form created for consumption by a new class of American collectors.

Artists like Winslow Homer and Alfred T. Bricher redefined the presentation and composition of landscape drawings through the nascent medium of watercolor. In the drawing *Autumn Trees* of 1878, Homer demonstrated how the quick, sketchy watercolor style could capture the flickering of light in the changing leaves. In Bricher’s bright and sunny drawing *Low Tide, Indian Rock, Narragansett, RI*, the artist left areas of the surface bare to conjure the sight of sea foam. Both Homer’s landscape and Bricher’s seascape express the refinement and subtlety of watercolor.

Another artist who expanded the vision of American seascapes was Addison Thomas Millar (1860-1913). Born to Scottish immigrant parents in the Midwest, Millar later found himself at the Art Students League in New York City in 1883 and by 1892 was in Southampton studying with William Merritt Chase (1849-1916) at the Shinnecock Summer Art School. Millar’s *Seascape* dates to this period as his use of the medium of pastel on paper was both common for the late nineteenth century and extremely popular with his teacher, Chase. The crystal cool tones of Millar’s still, early morning Southampton beach demonstrate his immense skill.

Nineteenth century drawings also captured genre scenes and individuals in the form of caricature. The drawing *Family Scene, Isle of Man* by Julian Alden Weir (c. 1889), for example, demonstrates how watercolor was easily adapted for capturing nineteenth century interiors. Depicting his wife and children during their trip to Europe in the summer of 1889, *Family Scene, Isle of Man* is done in an impressionistic style that creates a cozy and domestic atmosphere.

Women artists of the nineteenth century also created highly skilled works on paper. In Lilian Westcott Hale’s (1881-1963) *Portrait of a Lady (The Veil)*, the artist subtly modelled a woman’s face shrouded by a delicate veil. Fabric was particularly difficult to capture and her charcoal rendering of both a tapestry and veil proved her mastery. Another artist, Fidelia Bridges (1834-1924), produced watercolors of flora and fauna in the late nineteenth century created a cult of detail. Drawings like *Bird and Willows* and *Autumn in the Marsh* show the influence of the meticulous style of the Pre-Raphaelites, one of her interests. Lastly, Anna Mary Richards Brewster (1870-1952) also excelled at nature drawings. Her graphic work *Flowers and Leaves* demonstrates her mastery of close observation.

In addition to landscapes, genre scenes, and nature drawings, artists have also frequently captured their surroundings on paper. Artists like Edward Hopper (1882-1967) often created a series of sketches of familiar locales as part of a larger experiment with line and composition. As seen in the pencil work *The Family House at Nyack* from 1906, which depicts Hopper’s birthplace and family home, the artist astutely captures his environment. The same can be said

for Stuart Davis (1892-1964), who became known for his Cubist-inspired scenes of New York City after moving there to study at the Robert Henri School of Art in 1912. Davis's drawing *Lower Manhattan* from c. 1930 shows his ability to organize and structure a linear composition featuring the city's rising skyscrapers.

While a select few paintings are highlighted here, the entirety of Hawthorne Fine Art's diverse collection is accessible through the Inventory page of the gallery website, HawthorneFineArt.com. The gallery is holding open hours at its Manhattan showroom throughout February from 12:00 - 4:00, no appointment necessary. For more information or to make an appointment outside of normal gallery open hours, please contact the gallery at info@hawthornefineart.com, or by phone at 212.731.0550.