



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

Harriet E. Monteith (1903-1975)

Harriet E. Monteith was born in Wakarusa, Indiana in 1903 to Clara A. and Nicholas B. Yoder, a hardware store merchant. Monteith's artistic ability was recognized when she was still a young girl. Her parents arranged for her private art instruction by the time she was a teenager. Monteith was a graduate of Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky and the Fort Wayne Art School in Fort Wayne, Indiana.¹

In 1925, the artist married Mark L. Monteith in Goshen, Indiana.² Her husband was supportive of her creative endeavors and encouraged her to further her training. She began studying under Emil Jacques, head of the art department at Notre Dame, and continued for nearly a decade.³ Following the death of her teacher in 1937, Monteith traveled every Saturday to the Chicago Art Institute where she continued her studies.⁴ She also studied under Homer Davisson in Fort Wayne, and spent 5 summers studying under Robert Brackman in Noank, Connecticut.⁵

Monteith and her husband bought an old clap-board house in Elkhart and using salvaged materials remodeled the structure to resemble an English Tudor home with a brick façade. Monteith had a private gallery at home where she displayed her work. A stained glass window in the gallery was salvaged from an old mansion. Monteith held weekly art classes in a barn-like structure in a nearby grove of Elms. On weekends, Monteith traveled to an artist colony in Saugatuck, Michigan. She often hitched a trailer to her car and would take her make-shift studio on the road in search of new subjects. Her cat "Butch" often joined her on these excursions.⁶

Monteith exhibited regularly with the Hoosier Salon and was the recipient of many awards over a 30 year period. In 1944, she won 2nd prize for her *Christmas Morning*, and honorable mentions in three other categories including scenery in oil, still life, and pastels.⁷ In 1957, she was awarded 1st prize for her pastel work.⁸ At the 34th Annual Hoosier Salon in 1958, she was awarded \$50 from the art department of the Woman's Club for *Still Life with Cabbage*.⁹ The following year, she received 2nd prize for an oil portrait

¹ "Teacher, Artist Dies in Elkhart," The South Bend Tribune (South Bend, Indiana), Thu, Sep 4, 1975, 5.

² Ibid

³ "Climate for Culture," The South Bend Tribune (South Bend, Indiana), Sun, Aug 23, 1964, 112.

⁴ "Harriet Monteith," The Indianapolis Star (Indianapolis, Indiana), Sun, May 11, 1958, 134.

⁵ "Climate for Culture," 112.

⁶ "Harriet Monteith," 134.

⁷ "Annual Art Show Opens," The Times (Munster, Indiana), Sun, Jan 23, 1944, 11.

⁸ "Harriet Monteith," 134.

⁹ "Modern Begins to Steal Scene from Pictorial Art," The Indianapolis News (Indianapolis, Indiana), Mon, Feb 10, 1958, 24.



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and first prize for *My Mother Loved Amaryllis*, a floral still life.¹⁰ In 1968, she was awarded \$150 for an oil portrait at the 44th Annual Hoosier Salon.¹¹

In 1956, Monteith was presented with the Outstanding Award at the Northern Indiana Artists, Inc, exhibition in Hammond. She also received the Fort Wayne Art League Award at the Fort Wayne Museum and 1st prize for her still life at the Fort Wayne Woman's Club.¹²

In 1964, Monteith received an honorable mention for her work in a watercolor exhibition of women members of Chicago's Palette and Chisel Academy on Dearborn Street.¹³ Notably, she was the first woman to be awarded the gold medal from the Palette and Chisel.¹⁴

During her lifetime, Monteith had 14 one-woman exhibitions in Northern Indiana and Michigan.¹⁵ In 1962, an exhibition of her oil paintings and pastels was held at the Hoosier Salon Art Gallery.¹⁶ In 1969-1970, her work was exhibited in John G. Best Hall on the campus of Tri-State College in Angola.¹⁷ Her work was displayed for many years at the Hotel Elkhart.¹⁸

Monteith held memberships with the Brown County Art Guild; Hoosier Salon; Indiana Artists Club; Palette and Chisel Academy of Fine Arts [Chicago]; Indiana Federation of Arts Clubs; and the American Artist Professional Leagues in New York and Chicago.¹⁹

A prominent artist and teacher, Harriet E. Monteith died in 1975. She was 72 years old.²⁰ A year after her death, her husband bequeathed the town of Nashville, Indiana with an acre of land in honor of his late wife.²¹

Today, the Monteith home in Elkhart, Indiana is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

¹⁰ "Indiana Artists Win \$4,630 As Salon Opens In Block Auditorium," The Indianapolis Star (Indianapolis, Indiana), Mon, Jan 28, 1963, 12.

¹¹ "'Blanche' Wins Top Hoosier Salon Prize," The Indianapolis Star (Indianapolis, Indiana), Mon, Jan 29, 1968, 20.

¹² Ibid

¹³ "Art Notes," Chicago Tribune (Chicago, Illinois), Sun, Oct 25, 1964, 120.

¹⁴ "Climate for Culture," 112.

¹⁵ "Harriet Monteith Work on Display," The Indianapolis Star (Indianapolis, Indiana), Sun, Apr 15, 1962, 101.

¹⁶ "Harriet Monteith Work on Display," 101.

¹⁷ "Elkhartan Exhibits," The South Bend Tribune (South Bend, Indiana), Wed, Apr 15, 1970, 8.

¹⁸ "Harriet Monteith Work on Display," 101.

¹⁹ "Acre donated to town to honor artist," Brown County Democrat (Nashville, Indiana), Wed, Dec 15, 1976, 1.

²⁰ "Indiana-Michigan Obituaries," The South Bend Tribune (South Bend, Indiana), Thu, Sep 4, 1975, 37.

²¹ Ibid