



HAWTHORNE
Fine Art

WILLIAM TROST RICHARDS (1833–1905)

William Trost Richards, an affiliate of both the Hudson River School and the American Pre-Raphaelite movement, is known for his astonishingly precise seascapes set along the coast from New Jersey to Maine. Richards was born on June 3, 1833 in Philadelphia, where he remained for most of his life. He began his artistic training in 1850 with German-born Hudson River School painter, Paul Weber, supporting himself at the same time with work as a designer and illustrator of ornamental metalwork. Between 1853 and 1856, he traveled to Europe with fellow painters, William Stanley Haseltine and Alexander Lawrie, finding much inspiration in the Düsseldorf School's finely detailed landscape paintings.

Richards exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts from 1852 until 1905, the National Academy of Design from 1858 until 1905, and the Brooklyn Art Association from 1863 to 1885. He was a full member of the first two institutions, as well as of the American Water Color Society, and the Association for the Advancement of Truth in Art, an American Pre-Raphaelite group. In 1890, he and his wife moved to Newport, Rhode Island, where he continued to paint until his death in 1905. In the latter part of his career, he focused almost exclusively on coastal subjects, which reveal his particular fascination with the rhythm of waves crashing against the seashore. Richards rejected the romantic tendencies of many Hudson River School painters, pursuing instead the Pre-Raphaelite ideal of truth to nature.

Today Richards' works are in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of the National Academy of Design, New York; the Brooklyn Museum; the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Smithsonian Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C.; and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C., among many others.