

*Electrical In Movement:
American Women Artists at Work 1825–2015*

BY COURTNEY A. LYNCH



HAWTHORNE
Fine Art

*“The especial genius of women I believe to be
electrical in movement,
intuitive in function, spiritual in tendency.”*

—MARGARET FULLER

Electrical In Movement: American Women Artists at Work 1825–2015

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Hawthorne Fine Art, Manhattan Showroom (BY APPOINTMENT)
12 East 86th Street, Suite 527, New York, NY 10028

I AM DELIGHTED to bring forth an exhibition focused on the brilliant talents and fascinating lives of American women artists spanning two centuries. It is with gratitude to those who supported the exhibition I had co-curated at the Thomas Cole National Historic Site in 2010, *Remember the Ladies: Women of the Hudson River School* that I was motivated to expand on the concept by incorporating future generations of women. I very much hope you enjoy the diversity of subject matter contained in this show which I feel truly reflects the versatility of female talent in the profile of American Art. I would also like to thank Courtney A. Lynch for her persevering efforts in uncovering the latent stories behind each work and its maker. We greatly look forward to hearing your response to these images.

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MALLORY AGERTON (b. 1956)

The Line of Beauty, 2015

Oil on panel, 24 x 36 inches, Signed lower right

The Texas-based painter Mallory Agerton's artistic practice strives to achieve a duality of spiritualism and realism in landscape representation. Agerton, who studied at the Art Students League in New York City under Robert Beverly Hale (1901–1985) and David Leffel (b. 1931) and at the Landscape Atelier Program, holds a BFA from the University of Texas in Austin. Inspired by points in the Texas Hill Country and the mountains of Colorado, Agerton's practice is one based on observation. While calling upon the tradition of realism inherent in the work of her natural predecessors—such as the Hudson River School painters and Tonalists of the nineteenth century—Agerton's work also engages with contemporary notions of memory and imagined spaces.

While she works *en plein air* to sketch many of her compositions, Agerton completes her renderings with the aid of her memory and imagination. The resulting compositions reveal hybrid scenes that play with representation—striving to evoke a place rather than to simply illustrate it. *The Line of Beauty* emulates the ethereal, dream-like quality often found in Agerton's work.



ALICE WORTHINGTON BALL (1869–1929)

Sunday on the Old Plantation, Savannah, Georgia, 1923

Oil on board, 16 x 20 inches, Exhibition label on verso

EXHIBITED: Casson Galleries, Boston, November 1923

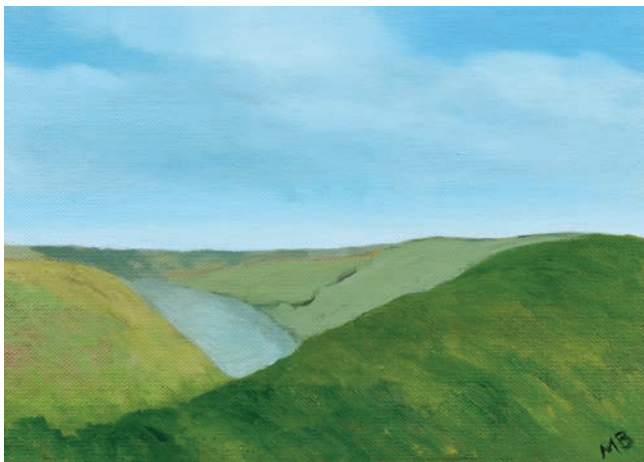
REFERENCED: “The World of Art: Sketches in Oil,” *Boston Herald*, November 11, 1923, 42

“Her work shows great breadth of conception and power of execution. It is evident that she has penetrated beneath the surface of material objects and been enabled, a consequence [sic], to represent the deeper meanings of the scenes she portrays.”¹

The Boston-born artist, Alice Worthington Ball, studied at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts under noted painters Frank W. Benson (1862–1951) and Edmund C. Tarbell (1862–1938), before furthering her artistic training in Europe—first in Paris under the guidance of Gustave-Claude-Étienne Courtois (1852–1923) and Raphaël Collin (1850–1916), and later in Holland under the American expatriate George Hitchcock (1850–1913). Upon her return to America she spent her time alternately between Baltimore and her native Massachusetts, where she often painted in Gloucester and Provincetown. A member of the Friends of Art of Baltimore, Ball was also an active member of the North Shore Arts Association of Gloucester, MA.

Sunday on the Old Plantation is one of several paintings Ball created on a trip to Georgia in early 1923, almost all of which were executed with a palette knife. This style, which diverges dramatically from that of her teachers as well as her earlier work, exhibits a preoccupation with alternative applications of paint and emphatically textured surfaces. In a visual articulation reminiscent of Impressionism, Ball employs shape, tone and color to reference the elaborate scene—the figures in the foreground, the sinewy branches of the trees, the thatched roof of the hovel—in an abbreviated hand. Though operating within a categorically modern visual language and sensibility, Ball’s treatment of the scene nonetheless succeeds in generating a quintessentially colorful and lively image of Southern life.

¹ “Miss Ball’s Exhibition,” *Boston Herald*, January 9, 1910, 40.





MEGAN BONGIOVANNI (b. 1975)

Four Seasons Along the Hudson, 2015

Oil on linen panel, 5 x 7 inches each, Signed lower right

Megan Bongiovanni, who studied at the Pont-Aven School of Art in Brittany, France (1997), at the School of Visual Arts (2004, 2009), and at the Art Students League (2010) in New York City, holds a BFA in painting from the Parsons School of Design (1999). Her work, which has been exhibited regionally, strives for bold, non-romanticized representations of land- and skiescapes. In an effort to reconcile her city surroundings with her artistic training in Pont-Aven, France, Bongiovanni turned from representations of idyllic scenes to studies of simplified landscape details: bright, imagined seascapes, tracts of expansive rolling hills, and swaths of cloud-dotted skies dominate Bongiovanni's work.

Bongiovanni's preference for small panels—usually measuring six inches—creates an intimate space for viewing, while the simplified forms *suggest* the undulating lines of land, sea and air rather than illustrating them outright. Bongiovanni's works, above all, demand an appreciation for form. Bongiovanni's *Four Seasons* panels conform to the time-honored trope of illustrating the year's divisions in series and across disciplines—from Giuseppe Arcimboldo's portrait heads (1560s and 70s), to Alphonse Mucha's series of feminine personifications (1896), to Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* concerti (1720–25) and accompanying poems. The panels of Bongiovanni's *Four Seasons* are intimate portraits of imagined spaces. They invite the viewer to appreciate the nuances of color, line and form while reflecting the introspective nature of her practice.



EDITH BOWERS (b. 1865)

Still Life with Vase and Red Shoes, 1897

Oil on board, 10 x 18 inches, Signed and dated 1897, lower left

Edith Bowers, now all but completely forgotten within the art historical record, has left behind works such as the present still life. They are testaments not only to women's talents in painting even at the fringe of the nineteenth and early twentieth century art world, but also records of daily life and, in this case, women's fashion.

Shoes in the nineteenth century, much like today, were not simply utilitarian; as much as any other article of clothing or accessory, they conveyed the wearer's status or class, and during the Gilded Age industrialization introduced a broader range of



mass-produced styles and shoe types. The shoes depicted in *Still Life with Vase and Red Shoes* are slippers, meant to be worn indoors and around the house, made fashionable by the addition of a pom-pom-like tassel over the toe. Shoe styles—even for indoor shoes such as these—changed quickly towards the latter end of the nineteenth century, featuring a square toe in the 1870s, rounded in the 1880s, and pointy in the 1890s.

Still Life with Vase and Red Shoes is predicated on careful study and attention to detail. The still life features two colorful and ornately decorated slippers (made fashionable by eastern-inspired embroidery and the inclusion of pom-pom rosettes) laid beside a dark, reflective vase. Her use of paint and color is restrained and meticulously thought-out, despite the disparate colors present in her subject matter. Though Bowers' artistic and educational background are unclear, it is undeniable that her work benefitted from years of careful study and practice.

MATILDA BROWNE (1869–1947)

Still Life with Bluebells and Peonies

Oil on board, 36 x 30 inches, Signed lower right

Best known for her lush landscapes, flower paintings, and picturesque scenes of animals, the American Impressionist Matilda Browne demonstrated considerable talent as a painter at a young age. When she was just twelve years old, one of Browne's flower paintings was exhibited at the National Academy of Design in New York City. She studied with the Hudson River School landscapist Thomas Moran (1837–1926) before traveling abroad in 1889. Browne traveled to Holland, where she studied with Henry Bisbing (1839–1933) and France, where she studied with Julian Dupré (1851–1910) in Barbizon. Browne was a constant student, studying additionally with such distinguished artists as Eleanor Elizabeth Greateorex (1854–1897), Frederick Freer (1849–1908), Charles Melville Dewey (1849–1937) and Carleton Wiggins (1848–1932).

Browne was active as an artist in New York City before becoming affiliated with the art colony in Old Lyme, Connecticut, in 1905. Established by the American Barbizon painter Henry Ward Ranger (1858–1916) in 1899, the Old Lyme Art Colony quickly became an important location for the development of American Impressionism. Centered around the boarding house run by Florence Griswold, the artists of the Old Lyme Art Colony were not always accepting of female artists into their ranks. However, Browne's artistic talent gained her recognition and respect from her male colleagues. She is therefore considered the first and only fully accepted female member of the Old Lyme Art Colony.

Reflecting on Browne's artistic accomplishments in the Colony, as well as the gendered association of the Colony itself and the artists' exuberant Impressionist technique, the writer Henriette Daus has said:

Matilda Browne is one of the best equipped of women painters. She often wields her brush with almost masculine vigor,—her work possesses personal strength and individuality; yet the influence of her distinguished masters is also perceptible.

In the present still life, Browne has masterfully recreated the unruliness of freshly-cut peonies and bluebells in a shallow china bowl. Untrimmed and colorful, the long stalks burst from their vase with unbridled tenacity, and Bush's swift gestural brushstrokes lend a liveliness to the scene. Painted in warm, pastel hues of blue and pink, *Still Life with Bluebells and Peonies* captures the impressionist style that was the essence of Browne's practice and a hallmark of the Old Lyme Art Colony.

1 Henriette Daus quoted in, "Matilda Browne—Fox Chase." Matilda Browne: A Leading Female Impressionist Era Artist. Accessed September 30, 2015.





SARAH COLE (1805–1857)

Ancient Column Near Syracuse, c. 1848

Oil on canvas, $11\frac{7}{8} \times 11\frac{7}{8}$ inches, Inscribed verso, “A Column Standing near Syracuse, Sicily copied from a picture by T. Cole by S. Cole”

Sarah Cole, known predominantly as the sister to the notable Hudson River School artist Thomas Cole (1801–1848), was—despite the shadow overcast by her more famous brother—an accomplished painter in her own right. Like her brother, Sarah made summer painting and sketching trips into the Catskills and, in 1838, accompanied her brother on a hiking and camping trip to Catskill High Peak. From such expeditions as these, Sarah produced both original and copied works. *Ancient Column Near Syracuse* is one that she likely copied after her brother’s *Column of Ancient Syracuse*, which was displayed at Thomas’s 1848 memorial exhibition.

Despite her older brother’s notoriety, Sarah was able to make a name for herself in her own time. Her patrons hailed from New York and Pennsylvania, and she exhibited at the National Academy of Design, the Maryland Historical Society, and the American Art-Union. With the support of her brother, Sarah Cole is a prime example of the industrious woman artist in the nineteenth century.

Ancient Column Near Syracuse is a bucolic and a telling example of Sarah’s talent as a painter. In the foreground, the column and flute-playing figure stand out as allegorical symbols that recall old master paintings and the architecture of ancient Rome. In the middle ground and distance, a rolling landscape unfolds, full of lush foliage and verdant pastures dappled in a rosy sunlit glow. While her artwork reflects the influence of her famous brother, Sarah Cole’s work is nonetheless endowed by a sensibility that is delicate, meticulous, and uniquely feminine.

EDITH WILKINSON COOK (act. 1851–1875)

Autumn Landscape with Figures, 1871

Oil on canvas, 7¹/₄ x 5⁵/₈ inches, Signed lower left

Edith Wilkinson Cook, much like Sarah Cole, was a landscape painter and a leading member of the Appalachian Mountain Club, who embarked annually on summer hiking and sketching trips to New Hampshire's White Mountains. A family friend to noted Hudson River School painters Sanford Gifford (1823–1880) and Jervis McEntee (1828–1891), Cook benefitted greatly from these relationships. The present painting, *Autumn Landscape with Figures*, survived through descent through Gifford's family, and could possibly have been a gift from one artist to the other.

Cook's small but intimate scene depicts three elegantly dressed women as they walk along a woodland path at its center. With the use of gentle, warm rose tones, *Autumn Landscape* reveals the influence of McEntee, whose haze-laden Catskill scenes evoked a similar atmosphere, and Gifford, whose attention to detail is rivaled in Cook's delicate brushstrokes. Cook's unique style, however influenced, emerges in *Autumn Landscape* as one uniquely her own.





LILIAN WESTCOTT HALE (1881–1963)

Portrait of a Lady (The Veil)

Pencil and charcoal on paper, 9 x 7 inches

“[...] Then there is drawing for its own sake, done not to exhibit virtuosity when it has any real merit, but to fixate something believed to be beautiful. Such a drawing is complete within itself, whether or not it is related to a subsequent painting. Here belong Lilian Westcott Hale’s charcoal drawings, composed as emotionally as a Japanese print and executed as lovingly as if each were to decorate a palace.”¹

Lilian Westcott Hale—born Lilian Clarke Westcott—was raised in Hartford, Connecticut. After studying at the Hartford School from 1897–1900, Hale was granted a scholarship to the School at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, which she attended from 1900–1904. It was in Boston that Hale studied under William Merritt Chase (1849–1916), Edmund Tarbell (1862–1938), and Philip Leslie Hale (1865–1931)—the last of which she married in 1902. Hale’s schooling, as well as her refined style, situate her squarely within the Boston School of American Impressionism. Hale’s impressionistic paintings and charcoal drawings were immensely popular, and she exhibited consistently in Boston through the 1920s.

Hale’s light touch and skilled handling of charcoal is readily apparent in such works as *Portrait of a Lady (The Veil)*. The softly rendered, delicate features of the woman are offset against the texture of the paper, which Hale has worked over to produce an eerie and ethereal sense of distance between the viewer and the subject. Hale’s mixed treatment of graphite and charcoal produces the suggestion of diffuse light, a recurring motif in many of her paintings and drawings. While Hale’s marks on paper are sketch-like and in-exhaustive, each gesture suggests a high level of detail; this dichotomy crystalizes her works somewhere between realized and imagined form, while her commensurate skill in both painting and drawing confirms her place as a talented exemplar of American Impressionism.

¹ “Painters’ Drawings at St. Botolph Club,” *Boston Herald*, March 29, 1914, 39.

ALICE HIRSCH (1888–1935)

Chrysler Building, 1931

Oil on canvas board, 16 x 12 inches, Signed, titled and dated 1931, lower right

The impressionist painter Alice Hirsch often looked to the skyline of New York City for her subject matter and inspiration; throughout her career, she captured the energy and atmosphere of the city's many neighborhoods with her lively brushwork and acute sense of color. After graduating from the Art Students League, Hirsch marketed her works directly from her studio, as well as through exhibitions at the Society of Independent Artists and at the National Association of Women Artists. Such drive, combined with her distinctive talent, led to both critical and financial success—quite an achievement, given that female artists of this time were not accorded the same level of respect or offered the same opportunities as their male contemporaries.

Hirsch's *Chrysler Building* immortalizes Midtown East's iconic Art Deco skyscraper, which had just been completed one year prior. At the time *Chrysler Building* was painted, it may well have still been the tallest building in the world (It wasn't until mid-1931 that the Empire State Building surpassed the Chrysler in height). Hirsch's painting was completed just after Georgia O'Keeffe's famous painting series of New York City buildings (1925–1930). O'Keeffe's 1927 painting *Radiator Building*, for example, presents the Manhattan skyscraper at night, striving to represent the city's modernity as much as her own. Hirsch's impressionistic take on the *Chrysler Building* would seem to follow suit. Painted in subdued hues of blue and gray, Hirsch's painting renders the Chrysler Building a dominating structure on the New York City skyline, partially obscured by a dreamy haze. Impressionism marks Hirsch's style as deftly applied brushstrokes indicate atmosphere and punctuate lit interiors, while detail shines through in the Chrysler Building's delicately rendered Art Deco facade and its famous 125-foot spire. While celebrating the New York City skyline, Hirsch's painting also perfectly documents the brief year that the Chrysler Building held the record as the tallest in the world.



MARIA LOUISE KIRK (1860–1938)

A Lady

Watercolor and pencil on paper, 7 x 8½ inches (oval), Signed lower right

The portrait painter and illustrator Maria Louise Kirk was best known in her time for her colorful and imaginative children’s book illustrations, as well as for her sensitive portraits of society women. A native of Philadelphia, Kirk attended the Philadelphia School of Design for Women, as well as the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. In 1894, Kirk was awarded the Mary Smith Prize—designated for the best painting by a female painter—for one of her portraits exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. During the course of her career, Kirk illustrated in color more than fifty children’s books, including: *The Princess and the Goblin* by George Macdonald (1920), *The Secret Garden* (1911) by Frances Hodgson Burnett, and an adaptation of Longfellow’s *Hiawatha* (1910).

A Lady is a portrait typical of those Kirk painted throughout her career, and the Mary Smith prize that she received in 1894 was for a similar piece. Though the portrait’s original function was a descriptive one, *A Lady* has come to represent a dual evocation of timelessness and consummate femininity. Not unlike the portrayals of women by Abbott Handerson Thayer (1849–1921), Kirk’s *A Lady* evokes a gentle quality, portraying the sitter as the embodiment of the ideal woman—virtuous, principled, and subtly transcendent.





H. SOPHIE LOURY (1858–1915)

A Bevy of Quail, 1887

14³/₁₆ x 22 inches, Signed lower left

Although few details are known about the life of Harriet Sophia Lory, her surviving paintings and illustrations immediately indicate her remarkable talent and attention to detail. Originally of Dayton, Ohio, Lory studied there under the still-life painters Laura C. Birge (1846–1928) and Marry Forrer (1838–1929). Lory never married or settled in one place. Instead she chose to travel widely, making a name for herself in Washington, D.C., New York City, Denver, Colorado, and San Diego, California, in addition to her native Ohio. She received national notoriety for her paintings and illustrations. In 1899, while living in Washington, D.C., she exhibited at the Society of Washington Artists and, for a number of years, had at least one painting on constant



view in the rooms of the Art League of New York City. A member of the Art Students League, she was also the first woman to exhibit in the Paris International Exhibit.

Loury worked with both watercolor and oil paints, and even made somewhat of a name for herself as a “china decorator,” according to some records. Her game paintings, such as the present *Bevy of Quail*, are reminiscent of the detailed wildlife scenes and game still lifes of Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait (1819–1905). Loury, who took on illustrative projects for surgical textbooks and didactic lectures throughout her career, clearly prized and honed her skills in naturalistic accuracy. The quail depicted in this painting are easily identifiable in their stout stature and wary demeanor, their patterning intricate enough to indicate not only their species (Northern Bobwhite), but also their genders: four males, and one female. Loury’s aptitude for accurate representation is dependent wholly on her talent as an illustrator and her mastery of her painting materials, for which her nineteenth century acclaim was undoubtedly well-deserved.

HARRIET RANDALL LUMIS (1870–1953)

The Pine Forest, Oil on canvas, 40 x 26 inches

EXHIBITED: Connecticut Academy of Fine Arts, 1920

“Autumn views are this painter’s special success; she has a fine feeling for the atmosphere that on warm October days softens the glory of gorgeous foliage. The reds and yellows are there, and greens, too, but they haven’t the glare of the young essay-writer’s October.”¹

The art teacher, artist advocate and landscape painter Harriet R. Lumis successfully spent her career cultivating both her artistic talents and a close-knit professional art community in the Springfield, Massachusetts area. Lumis studied under the landscapist Willis Seaver Adams (1842–1921), the Impressionist Leonard Ochtman (1854–1935) and the Tonalist Edward Parker Hayden (1887–1922).² An ambitious and assertive woman, Lumis had comprehensive views on aesthetics and theories of art. Throughout her career—and especially in the last decades of her life—she was a trenchant opponent of modernist trends in early twentieth century art.

Lumis was a prominent member of the Springfield Art League, which she helped to found in 1919, until an influx of modernist artists provoked her to cease her membership in 1932. “You don’t have to know how to paint to produce this modern trash,” Lumis was quoted as saying in a 1949 article. Lumis was blunt and vocal regarding her opinion of modernist artists and, as a result, was instrumental in forming the Academic Artists Association in 1949. The group was intended to promote the interests of academic artists, whom the members of the association believed had been sidelined by emerging modernist trends.

Despite her resistance to the tide of modernism, Lumis nonetheless built a solid reputation as a remarkable teacher and talent. Works such as *The Pine Forest* are no exception. With a nod to realism and a steady hand, Lumis has rendered the scene with exceptional skill and dexterity. Attention to color, tone and light effects—paying special attention to the imagined vanishing point, a setting sun that burns red through the trees and draws the viewer’s eye tenaciously through the mossy sentinels—*The Pine Forest* not only represents the talent that pervades Lumis’s *oeuvre*, but illustrates the aesthetic principles for which she stood.

¹ “Works of Mrs. Harriet Lumis” *Springfield Republican*, May 15, 1915, 6.

² *Ibid.*





MAUD MARY MASON (1867–1956)

View of Gramercy Park [from 36 Gramercy Park East], ca. 1929–31
Oil on canvasboard, 20 x 16 inches, Signed lower left

Though born in Kentucky, the still life and flower study painter Maud M. Mason spent most of her adult life alternating residences between New York City and Fairfield County, Connecticut. As a student, Mason trained as a designer before studying with artists Arthur Dow (1857–1922) and Frank Brangwyn (1867–1956). In 1916, Mason exhibited a still life at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, California and, by 1917, had become the president of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors in New York City. Between the years 1929 and 1931, Mason cited 36 Gramercy Park East as her primary residence. It was at this address, looking west over the park, that Mason would have painted *View of Gramercy Park*.

View of Gramercy Park is, on the surface, a typical image for Mason. However, upon closer inspection, it is also one that illustrates her ability to play with convention, as deceptively complex compositional devices are embedded into an otherwise typical scene. The focal points within the frame—two potted plants in full view, a third hidden just out of sight, and a snowy cityscape visible just beyond the parted curtains—are arranged slightly-askew, offsetting the scene's balance. In *View of Gramercy Park*, Mason cares not for aesthetic embellishment or balanced compositional convention. She made clear compositional choices to this respect: rather than move the ungainly third plant, which creates tension in the lower right corner, Mason chose to leave it partially in-view; rather than omit the tree rising just outside the window, which obscures the façade of the opposite building, she chose to paint it as it appeared; rather than adjust the frame of the composition to include the very base of the central plant, Mason chose to let it run out of view. On the surface, the works that dominate Mason's *oeuvre* are decorative flower studies and ornamental still lifes. However, a deeper look at her penchant for unflinching realism reveals her prioritization of authenticity over idealism, making works such as *View of Gramercy Park*—in Mason's own way—subtly subversive.

LAURA OPPER (1850–1924)

Portrait of a Young Girl with Roses, 1899

Oil on canvas, 20 x 16 inches, Signed and dated 1899, lower left

Laura Opper was most notably lauded in her time for her sensitive and insightful portraits. She trained at the Art Students League in New York with the Impressionist painter William Merritt Chase (1849–1916), with whom she also studied landscape painting in Spain. Opper also trained at the National Academy in New York City, where her work was similarly influenced by the Impressionist painter James Carroll Beckwith (1852–1917). Opper was a member of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors, as well as the Art Students League.

Portrait of a Young Girl with Roses is exemplary of Opper's painting style, as well as her talent for capturing her sitters' likenesses. Rendered in jewel tones of pink and blue, Opper's attention to detail and use of contrasting tone shows a great debt to her teachers, Chase and Beckwith, while her composition and sensitive rendering of features convey a feminine style that is uniquely hers. The young sitter—doll-like in articulation, with rosy cheeks and a piercing yet gentle stare—is strikingly realistic and complimented by the tangle of roses clutched in her hand.





PAULINE PALMER (1867–1938)

Girl with Red Parasol

Oil on panel, 24 x 20 inches, Signed lower left

“Here is what Mrs. Pauline Palmer says a woman must have to become a successful painter: correct training; ability to do a man’s work; sympathy with the model; personality plus work, plus concentration, plus more work.”¹

Pauline Palmer of Chicago, Illinois, was in her time an extremely distinguished and accomplished artist—often cited in her time as *the*, “outstanding woman painter in America.”² A central figure of the artistic community of the midwest, Palmer had the distinction of being the first woman president of the Chicago Society of Artists. Palmer attended the Chicago Art Institute, where she studied with William Merritt Chase (1849–1916) and Kenneth Hayes Miller (1876–1952), before traveling to Paris to study under the French academicians Lucien J. Simon (1861–1945), Gustave-Claude-Étienne Courtois (1852–1923) and Raphaël Collin (1850–1916). Palmer exhibited widely throughout her career, including shows at the Paris Salon (by 1903) and at the Naples Exposition of Fine Arts (1911).

Palmer’s paintings—often portraits of women and girls enjoying leisure activities—are testaments to her talent as an artist and her fluency in Impressionist techniques. *Girl with Red Parasol* is a striking example of this illustrative talent. The girl, who poses demurely beside her babydoll and carriage, is the very image of youthful innocence. The impression of a dazzling summer day is amplified by liberal swaths of concentrated pigment, while impossibly bright bursts of color and confident lines set Palmer’s work apart from her contemporaries.

¹ “Pauline Palmer Gives Recipe for Success,” *Republic*, February 5, 1927, 4.

² “Famous Chicago Artist Summoned,” *Morning Star*, August 16, 1938, 9.

CLARA FAIRFIELD PERRY (1870–1941)

Tree in Bloom

Oil on board, 14 x 11 inches, Signed lower right

The landscape artist Clara F. Perry, though a lesser-known name in the canon of early twentieth century American art, is almost certainly one of its most under-appreciated. Perry, who pursued her artistic training in Brooklyn, New York with Henry Bayley Snell (1858–1943), Ettore Caser (1880–1944) and her would-be husband, Walter Scott Perry (1855–1934), was an avid participant in the Brooklyn art scene during the first decades of the twentieth century. She was an active member of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors; the Meridian Club; the Brooklyn Society of Art; Brooklyn Painters and Sculptors; and the Marblehead Art Association. Her work was exhibited during her lifetime at Pratt Institute (1917), and at the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors (1924).

Any notoriety that Clara Perry has received—both during her lifetime and following her death—is often subsumed under that of her husband, Walter Scott Perry, who was a well-known artist, writer and arts educator. Because her husband was once her teacher, his style is often considered to be the guiding influence of her artistic practice. However upon closer examination, Clara Perry’s paintings reveal her to be a remarkable talent in her own right. *Tree in Bloom*, for example, not only illustrates Perry’s cultivated skill but, more importantly, suggests her natural talent. The flowering dogwood tree at the scene’s center is a veritable explosion of texture and vitality. While another artist might have employed color variations to promote the drama in the flower buds’ erupting pedals, Perry chose to restrain her palette, opting instead for impressionistic textures and rugged brushstrokes to communicate the joy of a tree in full bloom. A cluster of yellow wildflowers dot the foreground, subtly mirroring the dogwood’s natural celebration of spring’s arrival. Painted with a confident hand and discerning eye, Clara Perry’s artworks support a rich artistic legacy that stands independent from that of her husband.





LAUREN SANSARICQ (b. 1990)

Pastoral Scene of the Hudson River Valley

Oil on canvas, 14 x 24 inches, Signed lower right

Lauren Sansaricq, of Columbia County, New York, was enamored with the beautiful landscapes of the Hudson River Valley from an early age. Under the tutelage of Thomas Locker (1937–2012), Sansaricq was instructed in the painting techniques and nuances of the Hudson River School style before furthering her academic training in drawing and painting at the Grand Central Academy of Art in Manhattan. Sansaricq's work has been exhibited at both the Salmagundi Club and the National Arts Club, and she has been the recipient of the Hudson River Fellowship three times. "I am in the pursuit of beauty," says Sansaricq. "To me nature is the most beautiful thing and to study its beauty brings me closer to God. Being in nature is a very transcendental experience. To me, nature is a portal to higher spiritual and philosophical thought."



Pastoral Scene of the Hudson River Valley is one such canvas that captures the transcendental quality that so defined the Hudson River School style. Sansaricq's meticulous brushstrokes effortlessly render details so fine that one can almost make out the individual leaves on each towering oak tree, or the long blades of grass rising from low-lying outcroppings of rocky terrain. The light effects and shadows—cast by the diffused sun as it sets over the Hudson River and dips behind the hazy mountains beyond—radiate a warm, rosy palette. The atmospheric effects of a summer evening are expertly reflected in the gossamer clouds, breaking through the trees' backlit branches in warm tones of pink and yellow. Sansaricq's paintings, executed more than a hundred years after the artistic movement from which they draw their inspiration, are aesthetically synchronous with their eighteenth century counterparts. Guided by an identical philosophy, works such as *Pastoral Scene* form a pictorial bridge that effortlessly spans decades of American aesthetics.

MAUD HUNT SQUIRE (1873–1954)

Au Casino de Montmartre, 1913

Gouache, watercolor, and crayon on board, 18 x 21 inches, Signed lower left

The American illustrator and Ohio native Maud Hunt Squire spent most of her career as an expatriate artist in Paris and Vence, France, accompanied by her lifelong companion Ethel Mars. Together, the two artists (who met during their studies at the Cincinnati Art Academy), illustrated a variety of publications—usually for children’s books—and occasionally exhibited together. Squire herself exhibited regularly at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Cincinnati Art Museum, the Richmond Art Association and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, as well as at the Paris Salon. During the early decades of the twentieth century, Squire and Mars were early and frequent attendees of Gertrude Stein’s salons—gatherings attended by notable artists and writers—which took place every Saturday at Stein’s apartment. Squire and Mars were such prominent personalities that they inspired Stein to compose one of her earliest word portraits, *Miss Furr and Miss Skeene*. Though the work was completed in 1911, it was not published until 1922.

Au Casino de Montmartre dates to Squire’s early days in Paris, in the era of modernism and Stein’s salons. The painting is typical of Squire’s work during this period, when she favored watercolors, chalks, and color intaglio prints. Most often her scenes were those of daily life, such as café or outdoor scenes. *Au Casino de Montmartre* has been speculated to include the figure of Gertrude Stein—holding an umbrella in the center of the composition with a red feather in her hat—though the sketch-like articulation of the woman’s face makes identification difficult.





ELIZABETH STRONG (1855–1941)

In Full Cry

Oil on canvas, 49¹/₂ x 61¹/₂ inches, Signed lower right

“ . . . the work as a whole is exceptional for vigor and breadth of style, and for its entire absence of the qualities of delicacy and grace which are supposed to indicate womanly perception and execution. . . . In her description of animals Miss Strong shows a marked individuality; she detects and renders both action and character with much force, and there is suggested in her work a certain sense of humor which relieves it of monotony and tameness. Many of her pictures are portraits, but in this line, capable of so much that is conventional and tiresome, she has been able to give here and there clever indications of dog nature which impart to the picture something of interest outside of the likeness of the special creature portrayed.”¹

Elizabeth Strong was well-known in her time for her large-scale scenes and portraits of animals, typically dogs. A native of California, Strong spent many years in Paris where she studied under the French cattle painter Émile van Marcke (1827–1890/91) and exhibited repeatedly at the Paris Salon. In many contemporaneous accounts of her practice and artwork, Strong was referred to repeatedly as, “America’s Bonheur,”^{2 3} in reference to Rosa Bonheur (1822–1899) the noted French *animalière* and realist artist.

In Full Cry is impressive not only for its size, but also for its status as a hunt and game scene—a genre that was typically dominated by male artists. Though Strong periodically directed her brush towards more “feminine” subject matter—such as kittens or sheep—it was hunting dogs that dominated her output. Because of its size, *In Full Cry* was either owned by a club or exhibited at the Paris Salon. The composition of the piece can be described as nothing short of masterful, as the dogs in flight scamper down the rough hewn hillside in the upper right corner, leading the viewer’s eye along a sweeping trajectory toward the wide-eyed dogs at the lead. The painting’s size also draws attention to Strong’s delicate brushstrokes and exceptional treatment of paint on the canvas surface. In accuracy, action and mastery, *In Full Cry* makes it clear that the hunt and game genre is far from being an exclusively male arena.

1 “Fine Arts,” *Boston Herald*, April 6, 1890, 21.

2 “A Rich Man with Brains and Heart—What He is Doing for Art,” *Cleveland Leader*, January 8, 1888, 10.

3 “American Artists in Paris,” *Springfield Republican*, April 29, 1888, 10.



SOPHIE M. TOLLES (1831–1899)

Autumn in the Hudson Highlands

Oil on canvas, 9½ x 16 inches, Signed lower left

Though very little is known of the life of the painter Sophie Mapes Tolles, she was a native New Yorker who lived in the city nearly her entire life. In 1864, she studied with the American painter Peter F. Rothermel (1817–1895) in Philadelphia, and spent time studying in France and Italy. By 1871 she was the vice president of the Ladies' Art Association in New York City.



Tolles's *Autumn in the Hudson Highlands* is a prime example of the Hudson River School style she would have easily adopted from mid-nineteenth century artist circles in New York City. The scene adopts motifs and tropes tantamount to those used by her male counterparts: rich hues of red and brown articulate the lush vegetation in the foreground, recalling the sensuous effects of an autumn afternoon; in the distance, a band of sailboats drifts across a glassy lake, flanked by austere mountain cliffs and shrouded in dramatic atmospheric effects. With a gentle brush and sensitivity to tone and color, Tolles brings a decidedly feminine hand to a genre dominated throughout the nineteenth century by the tenacious hand of the typically male career-artist.

MARGUERITE ZORACH (1887–1968)

Flowers and Shells

Oil on canvas, 23¹/₂ x 19¹/₂ inches, Signed lower right

EXHIBITED: *Marguerite Zorach—At Home and Abroad*, Kraushaar Galleries, New York, NY, January 11–February 4, 1984

The early modernist artist Marguerite Zorach was known for her talent as a painter, printmaker and textile artist who cleverly merged the Cubist and Expressionist visual vocabularies that were dominant throughout the early decades of the twentieth century. Zorach pursued her studies in Paris (1908–11) with the French painter Jacques-Emile Blanche (1861–1942) and the Scottish painter-sculptor John Duncan Fergusson (1874–1961) at the Académie de la Palette. It was there that she—then Marguerite Thompson—met her future husband, William Zorach (1887–1966).

Following her studies, Zorach traveled throughout Europe, where she encountered and was influenced by the German Expressionists, as well as by the modernist work of Henri Matisse (1869–1954). She exhibited at the American Women's Art Association (1910), as well as at the Salon de la Société des Artistes Indépendants and the Salon d'Automne (1911). In New York she exhibited at the inaugural Armory Show (1913) and at the Forum Exhibition (1916).

The influence of contemporaneous European modernist movements on Zorach's practice can be clearly seen in such painted works as the present still-life, *Flowers and Shells*. While the flatness of the picture plane and fractured surface structure is a classically Cubist motif, Zorach has built up these forms with bright colors and bold lines, all of which are articulated in agile, Expressionist brushstrokes. The thick black outlines used to identify the borders and limits of the work's abstracted shapes are a common theme throughout Zorach's *oeuvre*; similar linear treatment is visible as early as in her European landscape scenes (ca. the 1910s) and continued through the end of her career. Not only is *Flowers and Shells* an innovative, modernist rendition of a typical composition, but it is also a complete subversion of its traditional, "feminine" subject matter. Zorach was equal to her male peers in talent, drive and success—a status that is readily apparent in the quality and inventiveness of her work.



Text: Courtney A. Lynch, M.A., a researcher and art historian who lives and works in New York City.

Front cover: Elizabeth Strong (1855–1941), *In Full Cry*, Oil on canvas, 49 1/2 x 61 1/2 inches, Signed lower right

Back cover: Alice Hirsch (1888–1935), *Chrysler Building*, 1931, Oil on canvas board, 16 x 12 inches, Signed, titled and dated 1931, lower right

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