



WATERCOLORS FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION

August 25–November 12, 2023
Curated by Christine McCarthy



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Watercolor painting dates perhaps to the cave paintings of Paleolithic Europe, and has been used for manuscript illustration since at least Egyptian times, with particular prominence in the European Middle Ages. However, its continuous history as an art medium begins with the Renaissance. The German Northern Renaissance artist Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), who painted several fine botanical, wildlife, and landscape watercolors, is generally considered among the earliest examples of watercolor.

Despite this early start, watercolors were generally used by Baroque easel painters only for sketches, copies, or cartoons. Notable early practitioners of watercolor painting were Anthony van Dyck (during his stay in England), Claude Lorrain, Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, and many Dutch and Flemish artists. However, botanical illustration and wildlife illustration perhaps form the oldest and most important traditions in watercolor painting. Botanical illustrations became popular during the Renaissance, both as hand-tinted woodblock illustrations in books or broadsheets and as tinted ink drawings on vellum or paper. Botanical artists have traditionally been some of the most exacting and accomplished watercolor painters, and even today, watercolors—with their unique ability to summarize, clarify, and idealize in full color—are used to illustrate scientific and museum publications. Wildlife illustration reached its peak in the 19th century with artists such as John James Audubon, and today many naturalist field guides are still illustrated with watercolor paintings.



Helen Frankenthaler, 1957, photograph by Gordon Parks

Watercolor painting also became popular in the United States during the 19th century; outstanding early practitioners included John James Audubon, as well as early Hudson River School painters such as William H. Bartlett and George Harvey. The American Society of Painters in Watercolor (now the American Watercolor Society) was founded in 1866. Late-19th-century American exponents of the medium included Thomas Moran, Thomas Eakins, John Singer Sargent, Childe Hassam, and, preeminently, Winslow Homer.

The term “watercolor” refers to paints that use water-soluble, complex carbohydrates as a binder. Originally (in the 16th to 18th centuries), watercolor binders were sugars and/or hide glues, but since the 19th century, the preferred binder is natural gum arabic, with glycerin and/or honey as additives to improve plasticity and solubility of the binder, and with other chemicals added to improve product shelf life.

This exhibition features watercolors from PAAM’s permanent collection including artists Charles Hawthorne, Josephine Hopper, Helen Frankenthaler, John Grillo, Blanche Lazzell, Ross Moffett, Lester Johnson, and many others.

ARTWORK LIST

LaForce Bailey (1893-1962)

Strollers, 1939
Watercolor on paper
Collection of Helen and Napi Van Dereck

Harry Brown, Jr. (1934-2005)

Untitled, 1929
Watercolor on paper
Gift of Shelby Shackelford, 1984

Peter Busa (1914-1985)

Sport, n.d.
Watercolor on paper
Gift of David Murphy, 2019

Oliver Chaffee (1881-1944)

Ormond Beach, 1938
Watercolor on paper
Gift of the Solveiga Rush Trust, 2021

Provincial Pitcher, n.d.
Watercolor on paper
Gift of the Solveiga Rush Trust, 2021

Jane’s Boat, Provincetown, n.d.
Watercolor on paper
Gift of the Solveiga Rush Trust, 2021

Edgar Corbridge (1901-1988)

Untitled (Lighthouse), n.d.
Watercolor on paper
Gift of Arthur Cohen, 2012

Edwin Dickinson (1891-1978)

Coffee Pot with Fruit, 1922
Watercolor on paper
Gift of Alfred T. and Joan M. Morris, 2019

John Dos Passos (1896-1970)

Harbor at Sunset, n.d.
Watercolor on paper
Gift of the Barbara C. Murchison Living Trust, 2016

Florida Duncan (20th century)

To Tibi from Florida - Provincetown, 1928
Watercolor on paper
Gift of Helen Dickinson Baldwin in memory of Antoinette (Tibi)

Helen Frankenthaler (1928-2011)

Provincetown Series II, 1960
Watercolor and crayon
Gift of the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, 2022

Xavier Gonzalez (1898-1993)

To Harriet with Love, 1984
Watercolor on paper
Gift of Harriet Rubin and Del Filardi, 2019

John Grillo (1917-2014)

Untitled (9), 1948
Watercolor on paper
Gift of the artist, 2011

John Hare (1908-1978)

Harbor Fog, Provincetown, n.d.
Watercolor on paper
Gift of Robert Eaton, 2016

Moored Boats, Provincetown, n.d.
Watercolor on paper
Gift of Robert Eaton, 2016

Charles Hawthorne (1872-1930)

Beach, St. Jean de Luz, 1929
Watercolor on paper
Gift of Marguerite Wilson

Figures on Pier, 1915
Watercolor on paper
Gift of Marguerite Wilson

Hans Hofmann (1880-1966)

Untitled, 1962
Watercolor and mixed media on paper
Gift of Evelyn Metz, 1984

Gerrit Hondius (1891-1970)

Untitled (Three Fishermen), n.d.
Watercolor on paper
Gift in memory of Dr. Ed Braun, 2020

Untitled (Interior with Barrels), n.d.
Watercolor on paper
Gift in memory of Dr. Ed Braun, 2020



WATERCOLORS FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION

Josephine Hopper (1883-1968)

Untitled (Clothes Line), n.d.

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Laurence C. and J. Anton Schifffenhaus in memory of Mary Schifffenhaus, and two anonymous donors, 2016

Thomas L. Hunt (1882-1938)

Still Life, n.d.

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Dr. Stephen Bernstein, 1984

Joel Janowitz (b. 1945)

Great Dunes Passage, 2002

Watercolor on paper

Gift of the artist, 2022

Great Dunes, 2000

Watercolor on paper

Gift of the artist, 2022

Lester Johnson (1919-2010)

Pier, c. 1952

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Josephine Johnson, 2016

Red Pier, c. 1955

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Josephine Johnson, 2016

Charles Kaeselau (1889-1970)

Fresh Fish, n.d.

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Selma Holtz, 2000

Karl Knaths (1891-1971)

East End Ice House, n.d.

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Frank Hogan, 1986

Karl Knaths (1891-1971)

The Ice House, n.d.

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Mrs. Emil J. Arnold, 1979

Blanche Lazzell (1878-1956)

Green Boat No. 6, n.d.

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Helen and Napi Van Dereck, 2007

William L'Engle (1884-1957)

Provincetown, 1928

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Dr. & Mrs. Henry Fogelman, 1991

Dorothy Loeb (1887-1971)

Fantasy Landscape, 1928

Watercolor on paper

Gift of James R. Bakker, 2013

Edwin Olsen (1902-1996)

Salt Train, 1926

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Robert Eaton, 2018

Stephen Pace (1918-2010)

Untitled (Sun Setting over Beach), 1966

Watercolor on paper

Gift of the Stephen and Palmina Pace Foundation, 2019

Herman Rose (1909-2007)

Provincetown, n.d.

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Virginia Zabriskie

Helen Walcott (1894-1965)

Schooner at Wharf, 1924

Watercolor on paper

Collection of Helen and Napi Van Dereck

Quentin Walter (b. 1948)

Nightview/MacMillan Wharf, 1985

Watercolor on paper

Gift from the STAF Collection, 2011

E.B. Warren (1886-1980)

Untitled (Boats in Water), n.d.

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Josiah Fisk and Miranda Fisk, 2022

John Whorf (1903-1959)

Rainy Day in Provincetown, n.d.

Watercolor on paper

Collection of Helen and Napi Van Dereck

Figures at the Shore, n.d.

Watercolor on paper

Norman and Dorothy E. Cook Collection, Gift of Dorothy E. Cook, 2000