



Exhibitions at  
PAAM

# Solitude by the Sea

## *Selections from the Collection*

CURATED BY DEORA STAROBIN AND MADELEINE LARSON  
ON VIEW MARCH 20–MAY 10, 2026  
IN THE MOFFETT GALLERY

This exhibition, curated and researched by Deora Starobin, 2025 Collections Intern at PAAM, explores the themes and imagery of the iconic Provincetown dunes, pulling artwork from PAAM's extensive permanent collection.

Since the early 20th century, artists have utilized the hidden wooden shacks nestled in the rolling hills of the Outer Cape dunes. Writers, musicians, and various visual artists have sought out the serene solitude and stillness as an outlet for their creative work.

The Peaked Hill Bars historic district of Truro and Provincetown occupies about 1,960 acres of land within the Cape Cod National Seashore. This district includes both the collection of historic shack buildings and the evocative natural landscape. Originally constructed as lifesaving huts in the maritime era of the mid 19th century, these shacks began to transition into residences through the 1920s–1950s. Dune shack dwellers and non-profit groups that supported shack use campaigned for the district to be recognized by the National Register of Historic Places. The dune shack preservation plan was finally completed in 2012. Today, some shacks are privately owned, while others are managed as artist residences in effort to support the creative projects of the local community.

With minimal roads leading to the residences and a lack of running water, plumbing, and electricity, these dune shacks provide a quaint space for creative minds to isolate themselves from the distractions of urban life. This essence of creative solitude encourages individuals to connect more deeply with the natural world around them. The coastal dunes are undoubtedly a distinctive landscape, originally formed from the wind blowing sand inland in response to glacial retreat and sea level changes. They are not static forms, but mounds that are constantly changing as the wind and waves erode and reshape the terrain. "Solitude by the Sea" highlights works from PAAM's collection that encapsulate the stillness and stark openness of life out in the dunes. While many artists embraced the process of plein air painting true to life, some were drawn to painting abstract forms, or utilized other mediums such as etching, linocut, and camera obscura photography.

*All text written and researched by Deora Starobin, 2025 PAAM Collections Intern.*

## ARTWORK LIST

Byron Browne

Sunset on Dunes, 1959

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Stephen B. Browne Testamentary Trust, 2024

Peter Busa

Dune Shack, 1936

Oil on paper, mounted on board

Gift of Chris Busa, 2006

Joan Cobb Marsh

Sunny Day at a Dune Shack (#1210), circa 2012

Oil on canvas

Gift of the artist, 2013

Barbara E. Cohen

Dog in the Dunes (Gabe in front of table), circa 1998

Oil on Polaroid

Gift of the artist, 2019

Dog in the Dunes (Gabe in front of dune shack), circa 1998

Oil on Polaroid

Gift of the artist, 2019

Salvatore Del Deo

Frenchie's Shack, 1964

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Del Deo Foundation for the Arts, 2024

Raymond Eastwood

Dunes, 1946

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Helen and Napi Van Dereck Estate, 2025

Joel Janowitz

Great Dunes, 2000

Watercolor on paper

Gift of the artist, 2022

Swift Dunes, 2005

Watercolor on paper

Gift of the artist, 2022

Wolf Kahn

My Shack on the Dunes, 1947

Oil on canvas

Gift of the artist, 1986

Marcia Marcus

Pilgrim Lake, 1967

Oil on canvas

Gift of Harry Kahn, 1979, restoration funded by Joe Treppiccione, 2023

Joel Meyerowitz

Provincetown Dune, 1977

Color photograph

Gift of Virginia Zabriskie, 1997

Ross E. Moffett

Untitled (Woman and Child in the Dunes), circa 1930

Monotype print

Gift of Shelby Shackelford, 1982, restoration funded by Carl G. Sessa and David M. Gagne, 2018

Portuguese Woman on the Dunes, n.d.

Oil on illustration board

Gift of Robert C. Duffy, 2013

Angèle Myrer

Dunes, 1952

Color white-line woodblock print

Gift of James R. Bakker in honor of Christine McCarthy, 2013

The Dunes, c. 1948

Oil on canvas

Gift of Arthur Cohen and Daryl Otte, 2014

Gloria Nardin

Back Shore Dune in Winter, 1979

Photograph

Gift of Anne Sterling, 2023

Daniel Ranalli

Zen Dune Garden #2 Provincetown (artSTRAND Portfolio 2006), 2006

Color photograph

Acquisition Fund Purchase funded by Richard and Judy Wurtman, Daniel and Judyth Katz, and David Murphy, 2007

Robert B. Rogers

Peaked Hill Dunes, n.d.

Linocut

Gift of the Helen and Napi Van Dereck Estate, 2025

Marian Roth

Perspective (from the Dune Shack Outhouse Camera Obscura Series), 2014

Giclee print

Gift of the Artist in honor of Sharon Fay and Maxine Schaffer, framing funded by Brooke and Megan Jones, 2018

Sol Wilson

Cape Cod Dunes, n.d.

Oil on panel

Gift of the Helen and Napi Van Dereck Estate, 2025