EXHIBITION CHECKLIST
PLEASE TAKE A COPY

This Green Earth: Landscapes from the Permanent Collection
Anne Gary Pannell Center Gallery  Sweet Briar College

This exhibition features works from the College’s art collection. The checklist is arranged by artists’ last name, alphabetically.

Here, the definition of “landscape” is broadly interpreted to include urban views as well as abstract studies inspired by nature and documentary parts of conceptual works. At Sweet Briar, we are encompassed by more than 3,000 acres of pastures and woodland—the campus includes two lakes and a mountain! Indeed, “learning on the land” is a pillar of the College’s most recent strategic plan. Yet in the midst of this natural beauty—so ordinary a part of our daily routine—this community of scholars may sometimes overlook it, may become insensible to the aesthetic and spiritual inspiration that nature offers. It is hoped that the works included here may remind visitors that landscape—literally “the shape of land”—has long been a treasured source of creative renewal.

...For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being…

William Wordsworth, Lines Composed Above Tintern Abbey, 1798
SYBIL ANDREWS 1898-1992

*Storm* 1935
linocut on tissue
13 x 9 1/8 inches
Purchase made possible by the Friends of Art
ACG.2005.003

Born in Suffolk, England, Andrews immigrated to Canada in the aftermath of World War II and settled with her husband on Vancouver Island. In her youth she could not afford art classes so subscribed to an art correspondence course, eventually becoming accomplished enough to secure a teaching post in her hometown, Bury St. Edmunds. In her 30s she was able to attend art school in London and was a founder and employee of the Grosvenor School of Modern Art there. It was at the Grosvenor School that Andrews first worked with linocuts, a medium in which she excelled and would use to create a body of unusually powerful and energetic images. She taught art privately in Canada and later in life was honored with election to the Society of Canadian Painters, Etchers, and Engravers. A considerable archive of her powerful graphic work is housed at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, Alberta.

OTTO HENRY BACHER 1856-1909

*Alcoven* 1879
etching on paper
11 ⅞ x 4 1/8 inches
Transfer from Cochran Library; Carnegie Collection
ACG.1976.003

Regarded as one of the finest etchers of his generation, the Cleveland-born Bacher started out as an interior decorator but by his early 20s headed to Europe for formal art training. He studied at the Royal Academy in Münich and with the expatriate German-American painter Frank Duveneck. Bacher subsequently attended the Académie Julian, Paris, and studied in Venice. It was in Venice that Bacher, who had set up a small private printing establishment there, met and worked with Whistler—a friendship chronicled in *With Whistler in Venice* (1907). Bacher returned to the United States in the 1880s and settled in New York, where he established a comfortable career.

JENNIFER LOSCH BARTLETT born 1941

*Air: 24 Hours/5 p.m.* 1994
etching on paper
16 ¾ x 16 ¾ inches
Purchase made possible by the Friends of Art, 1996
ACG.1996.001

Raised in Long Beach, California, the artist attended Mills College in Oakland and earned a MFA at Yale University in 1965.

Fascinated by the passage of time and the concept of rhythm as well as by the visual techniques of abstraction and repetition, Bartlett uses grids as a compositional element and creates series that refer to specific places she has lived or that highlight the mundane elements of daily life. In this print, one of a series depicting a koi pond at different times during a single day, she included a grid to mark off
the abstracted forms of darting, bright fish, green lily pads, and darkening water but also included a
clock to emphasize the passage of time.

ALBERT BIERSTADT  1830-1902
White Mountains, New Hampshire (Mountain Mist)  ca. 1860
oil on paper on board
7 ½ x 10 ½ inches
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Michael B. Wray (Mary Denny Scott ’61)
ACG.1983.010

Born in Germany but raised in New Bedford, Massachusetts, Bierstadt studied art in Düsseldorf and
Rome before settling in New York.

He is best known to students of American art for his massive, grandiose paintings depicting such
national landmarks as the Yosemite Valley and the Rocky Mountains—a genre in which his chief
competitors were Thomas Moran and Frederic E. Church. These monumental canvases were the
outcome of several ambitious excursions to Far West, the first accompanying U.S. government
surveyor Frederick W. Lander on his 1859 explorations, and cemented Bierstadt’s reputation as one
of the nation’s most ambitious and successful artists.

This small, informal sketch reveals a far different aspect of Bierstadt’s oeuvre. Painted just after he
returned from the Lander expedition, it demonstrates his interest in delicate atmospheric effects and
sensitivity to the more modest landscapes of New England.

LOUISE BOURGEOIS  born 1911
the puritan  1996
etching, chine collé, hand painting on paper
26 ½ x 20 inches
Purchase made possible by the Friends of Art
ACG.1997.003

The Paris-born Bourgeois was educated as a teenager at the Sorbonne, where she studied math. She
subsequently studied at the École du Louvre and the city’s École des Beaux-Arts. She immigrated to
New York in 1938 with her American husband. There, Bourgeois continued her studies at the Art
Students League.

Internationally known as a printmaker and sculptor—she represented the United States at the 1993
Venice Biennale—Bourgeois sought inspiration in the emotions and conflicts of her childhood.
Something of a departure from this trend, the puritan was conceived and written in 1947. It is a
surreal tale of a man who lives in New York amid strong, sharp skyscrapers and under a bright sky.
Bourgeois did not start to design and create the images until 1989. Sweet Briar’s copy, number 32 in
the limited edition, was finished in 1996. The hand-colored images are striking for their non-
objective abstraction, a departure from her otherwise representative, albeit surreal, mature prints.
CHARLES BURCHFIELD     1893-1967
Brooding Earth     1938
watercolor on paper
24 x 29 inches
Purchase made possible by friends of Virginia Randall McLaws, Professor of Art 1908-1930, in her honor
ACG.1941.001

A native of Ohio, Burchfield spent his life there and much of his mid-career work depicts the small towns and houses with which he was very familiar. He was trained at the Cleveland School of Art and after service in World War I supported himself as a wallpaper designer. He was able to turn fully to art in his late 30s.

Burchfield began and ended his career painting quite abstract, almost surreal images inspired by dreams and nightmare visions and infused with forms suggesting pulsating energy. His relatively ordinary Ohio landscapes—which much more saleable and allowed him to support his family—were created from the 1920s to about 1940. Burchfield's uniquely stylized landscapes are notable for a sort of brooding, melancholic atmosphere and he is considered by many scholars to have been a precursor of the American Scene movement typified by artists such as Edward Hopper.

JOHN WILLIAM CASILEAR     1811-1893
Autumn Cornfield     1871
oil on canvas
12 x 20 inches
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Torrey
ACG.1956.002

Casilear began his career as an engraver, studying under the important early American master Peter Maverick. He subsequently studied painting with Asher B. Durand. Durand and Thomas Cole, close friends and leaders of the 19th century American art world, were the young nation’s earliest professional landscape painters and as such their work defined the genre for a century or more.

Casilear is considered, with these mentors, a first-generation member of the Hudson River School. Despite travel and study in Europe in the 1840s, he made the pastoral New England landscape his life-long subject.

EDWIN DICKINSON     1891-1978
Boathouse, Wellfleet     1943
graphite on paper
11 x 6 inches
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred D. Chandler (Fay Martin ‘43)
ACG.1989.004

Raised in Buffalo, New York, Dickinson’s childhood was marred by a series of family tragedies, an experience thought to have influenced the somber, introspective mood of much of his mature work. Beginning in 1911 he trained at the Art Students League, New York, with William Merritt Chase and then studied with Chase's follower Charles Hawthorne at Provincetown, Massachusetts, 1913-1916.
Years of financial struggle gradually gave way to art world recognition with major, controversial paintings such as *The Fossil Hunters* (1928).

Dickinson’s unique output encompassed both monumental paintings and much smaller, delicate landscape drawings such as this example. He worked meticulously and methodically, hoping to capture the evanescent effects of light. This drawing shows a view through a pane of glass in his studio uphill from the family home on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. The artist’s daughter noted in a letter to Sweet Briar gallery staff in 1991 that “father was intensely interested in rendering the subtle changes which take place when something is seen through glass and this is one of a real number of such drawings.”

**CARL GAERTNER** 1898-1952

*Strip Mine* 1949

gouache on Masonite
20 x 14 ¼ inches

Gift of the American Academy of Arts and Letters through the Childe Hassam Fund

ACG.1951.001

A native of Cleveland, Ohio, Gaertner first studied mechanical design at Western Reserve College (now University) before turning to painting. He studied at the Cleveland School of Art and taught there from 1925 to his untimely death in 1952.

Gaertner is best known for his depictions of industrial scenes. This work, rendered in a unlikely and somewhat jarring palette of pastel pink and blue, was given to Sweet Briar, just a year before the painter died, through a program—which is still in operation—run by the American Academy of Arts and Letters in order to place work by accomplished living artists in small museums across the country.

**EDWARD GAY** 1837-1928

*Wheat Fields* 1914

oil on canvas
25 x 30 inches

Gift of Susanne Gay Linville ’32, granddaughter of the artist

ACG.1936.002

This painting, a mild pastoral scene suggestive of the loosely rendered, atmospheric Tonalism of the Barbizon School—a stylistic precursor of Impressionism—was the first work of art given to Sweet Briar College.

Born in Dublin, Ireland, Gay immigrated to the United States with his family in 1848 as a result of the Irish Potato Famine. He grew up in Albany, New York, and in his late teens studied art in Karlsruhe, Germany. After his return to New York he enjoyed a long and successful career.
SANFORD ROBINSON GIFFORD 1823-1880

Autumn by the Lake (Autumn at Bolton, Lake George) 1863

oil on canvas
6 ¾ x 10 3/8 inches
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Torrey
ACG.1956.005

Raised in upstate New York near the Catskill Mountains, Gifford was deeply influenced by the work of painter Thomas Cole, who, a generation earlier, had brought the unique beauties of the American landscape to the full attention of art connoisseurs at home and abroad. After attending Brown University in the early 1840s and then studying for a time in New York, Gifford toured Europe in the mid 1850s—where he met and traveled with Albert Bierstadt—and even traveled to the Far West after his return home. Despite his wide-ranging travels, he found his most evocative subject matter in the pastures, lakes, and woods of New England.

Gifford is best known for his interest in light and atmospheric effects and is said to have considered the color of the air the most important aspect of a landscape painting.

ANDREW GOLDSWORTHY born 1956

Black Stone, Dumfriesshire 1994-1995

Cibachrome print
19 3/8 x 19 3/8 inches
Gift of Magda Salvesen ’65
ACG.1995.001.a

These two photographs are not so much independent works of art as they are documents of works of art. Goldsworthy uses the earth itself as his “canvas,” manipulating or gently altering elements such as rocks, water, and foliage as he explores their inherent expressive potential and directs his viewer’s gaze to the ephemeral nature of art, the fundamental solidity of the earth, and the relentless march of time. In these particular views, he has called attention to a small forest pool with unexpected color in the water and has turned a massive stone into a brooding black sentinel. In both he used pigments derived from the earth. Goldsworthy’s work is meant to return gradually to its natural state as pigments or constructions are washed or blown away or subside. Of his photographs, he has noted “There is an intensity about a work at its peak that I hope is expressed in the image. Process and decay are implicit in that moment.”

Born in Leeds, England, Goldsworthy moved Dumfriesshire, Scotland, in 1985. Though he attended art schools, he has observed that his most important experiences came in his youth when he worked on farms outside Leeds. Goldsworthy has created site-specific art all over the world and in a wide variety of climates and landscapes. From 2000 to 2008 he was a visiting professor-at-large at Cornell University.
GRACE HARTIGAN  1922-2008
Pastorale  1953
silkscreen on paper
7 ¾ x 10 13/16 inches
Sweet Briar College Art Fund purchase
ACG.1969.001

Born and raised in New Jersey, Hartigan settled in New York in the 1940s after a failed marriage and established herself in the vibrant art scene there. Considered a second-generation member of Abstract Expressionism, she was one of the rare women praised by prominent art critics at the time. Though Hartigan was deeply influenced by Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, she incorporated far more of the natural world in her paintings, blending figurative elements and vibrant abstraction. She moved to Baltimore in the 1960s and taught for many years at the Maryland Institute College of Art. The work on view dates from Hartigan’s earliest involvement with the Abstract Expressionists.

JACQUES HNIZDOVSKY  1915-1985
Louisiana Champion Live Oak  1977
woodcut on paper
14 7/8 x 23 13/16 inches
Gift of the Class of 1979
ACG.1980.003

A native of Ukraine, Hnizdovsky studied art in Warsaw and Zagreb before immigrating in the United States in 1949. Recognized with numerous fellowships at the MacDowell Colony and the Yaddo Foundation, the artist was a favorite of the Sweet Briar community due to his numerous residencies at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts in the 1970s and early 1980s. The strong, almost abstracted patterning in this image is typical of his virtuoso woodcuts, in which he focused on very stylized trees, crops, and farm animals rendered in a bold graphic style.

MAMIE HOLST  born 1961
Landscape Before Dying (New York Destruct/Construct #2)  2000
acrylic on canvas
16 x 13 inches
Gift of the artist and Feature Inc., New York
ACG.2011.012

Essayist Johanna Burton has written extensively about Holst’s work for a 2003 exhibition catalogue, taking note of the Landscape Before Dying series: “For some years, Holst has continued slowly working on a series of paintings cumulatively titled Landscape Before Dying... Composed entirely of Holst’s signature palette of black, white, and gray, the works describe the intricacies of a topography that is
at once adamantly physiological and yet naggingly otherworldly. It’s tempting to read *Landscape before Dying* in a temporal fashion, as though Holst is mapping her unusual journeys in preparation for mortality. Unmoored within one of Holst’s landscapes, one…no longer knows right away whether one is running toward the center or escaping.” Of her work, Holst herself remarked in 2003, “For me the *Landscape Before Dying* series alludes to questions concerning the mysteries of life.”

The painter holds an MFA from the School of Visual Arts, New York, and an BFA from the University of Western Florida.

YVONNE JACQUETTE     born 1934
*Nightscape*   1998
woodcut on paper
15 5/8 x 19 3/4 inches
Gift of Catherine Caldwell Cabaniss ‘61
ACG.2001.010.3

Jacquette was born in Pittsburgh and raised in Stamford, Connecticut. She attended the Rhode Island School of Design and currently lives and works in New York and Maine. She is closely identified with a high-angle or aerial point of view, a perspective that allows her to explore and manipulate an otherwise ordinary representational image so that it dissolves into utterly flat, abstract patterns.

DAVID JOHNSON     1827-1908
*Mt. Elephant, Lake George*   1874
oil on canvas
12 1/4 x 20 1/4 inches
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Torrey
ACG.1956.003

A member of the second generation of the Hudson River School of American landscape painters, Johnson studied with Jasper Francis Cropsey and at the National Academy of Design, New York. He enjoyed a long and successful career but fell from favor with the advent of modernism.

Johnson and many of his contemporaries were rediscovered in the mid 20th century by scholars and museum curators writing the earliest histories of American art. Due to Johnson’s softly glowing views, he is generally considered to belong to a group of painters loosely termed “Luminists” for their masterful handling of light and atmosphere.

WILLIAM KIENBUSCH     1914-1980
*Island Balancing on Four Pines*   1952
casein on paper
21 1/2 x 25 1/2 inches
Gift of the artist’s estate
ACG.2006.005

A graduate of Princeton University, Kienbusch subsequently studied at the Art Students League with Raphael Soyer and John Sloan. He taught for a number of years at the Skowhegan School of
Painting and Sculpture and at the school of the Brooklyn Museum. The artist began painting in Maine in the mid 1930s and settled there permanently in 1962.

KAREN KUNC  born 1952
*Largely Looming*  1990
woodcut on paper
29 x 42 inches
Purchase made possible by the Friends of Art, 1993
ACG.1993.004

Kunc is Willa Cather Professor of Art at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she has taught since 1983. A native of Omaha, she earned her BFA at UN-L in 1975 and her MFA from Ohio State University in 1977.

Inspired by the Nebraska landscape—its vast space, wide skies, and terrifying storms—and influenced by German Expressionism as well as the ancient techniques of Japanese woodblock, Kunc creates masterful reduction woodcuts that blend rich color and energetic patterns.

JOHN MARIN  1870-1953
*New Mexico Landscape*  1930
watercolor on paper
17 ½ x 15 inches
Purchase made possible by the Friends of Art
ACG.1949.001

Marin was one of the first American artists to embrace modernism fully. Initially a student of architecture, he studied art at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and at the Art Students League, New York. Marin studied in Europe 1905-1911 and it was there that he encountered the emergent strains of abstraction that shaped his mature work.

His first solo exhibition at Alfred Stieglitz’s landmark New York gallery, 291, launched Marin into heart of the American avant-garde—in the company of Stieglitz’s other protégés Arthur Dove and Georgia O’Keeffe. He was represented in the paradigm-changing 1913 Armory Show, which introduced a startling array of modern styles to the American artists and art collectors, and was honored late in life as the United States’ representative at the 1950 Venice Biennale.

Watercolor was Marin’s signature medium and he is best known today for his landscapes of Maine and the arid Southwest. In this work his typical technique is apparent, as he used strong, slashing elements of color and shape to suggest the breadth and vibrant color of New Mexico’s mountains.
JOAN MITCHELL  1925-1992

Tree I  1992
lithograph on paper
24 ½ x 20 inches
Gift of Mary Jane Schroder Oliver Hubbard ‘62 in memory of her father, Andrew J. Schroder, II
ACG.2001.005

Born in Chicago, Mitchell attended Smith College, the Art Institute of Chicago, and Columbia University. Moving to New York in the 1940s, she became one of the few women working in the circle of Abstract Expressionists. Mitchell would spend much of her career as an expatriate, living in France.

This is a late work, printed with her long-time collaborators at Tyler Graphics, Mt. Kisco, New York. Created as she battled cancer in the last year of her life, the vibrant color and strong, energetic gesture of the drawing typify Mitchell’s mature technique. A series of tree images from this period was inspired by Mitchell’s glimpses of a beloved linden tree in her garden.

Since her demise, the artist’s estate has established the Joan Mitchell Foundation, dedicated in part to encouraging emerging artists.

JOAN MITCHELL  1925-1992

Trees II  1992
lithograph on paper
57 x 41 inches each (two sheets)
Purchase made possible by the Friends of Art
ACG.2001.006

JUDY PFAFF  born 1946

Yoyogi II  1985
woodblock on paper
35 x 31 ½ inches
Purchase made possible by the Friends of Art
ACG.1988.004

Born in London, Pfaff grew up in Detroit. She studied at Southern Illinois University and Washington University, where she received a BFA in 1971. Pfaff earned her MFA at Yale University in 1973, studying with Al Held. She began her career as an abstract painter and installation artist. In the decades since she has become an accomplished and daring printmaker.

The print’s title refers to a large public park in Tokyo. Pfaff created the print in Japan while participating in Crown Point Press’s international collaborative “woodcut project” and was inspired by the lively young people she saw congregated at the park. Her collaborators in the printing were Tadashi Toda and Hidekatsu Takada.

Pfaff is the recipient of a prestigious MacArthur Foundation fellowship award and has been recognized by fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. She teaches at Bard College.
MAURICE PRENDERGAST  1858-1924

*Salem Harbor*  1922
watercolor on paper
13 x 19 ¼ inches
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Prendergast
ACG.1945.003

Born in Newfoundland, Prendergast was raised in Boston. In the late 1880s he settled in Paris to study at the Académie Julian and Académie Colarossi. This was followed by further study in Venice.

Considered an American Post-Impressionist, Prendergast’s playful, charmingly colored watercolors have a mosaic quality. Interested in pattern and atmosphere more than the creation of an illusion of spacial depth, he focused on the flat, decorative qualities of people moving frieze-like through a scene. His innovative technique caught the attention of fellow artists struggling to escape the strictures of traditional, academic painting and he showed in the landmark 1908 Macbeth Gallery exhibition of The Eight—a group that included modernists George Bellows, John Sloan, and Robert Henri.

ABRAHAM RATTNER  1895-1978

*Study for Landscape*  1953
watercolor and graphite on paper
19 ¾ x 22 ¾ inches
Gift of Suzanne Reitz Weinstein ’60 in memory of Eleanor Dodge Barton, Professor of Art History, 1953-1971
ACG.2004.002

Rattner spent World War I as a camouflage artist in the U.S. Army and then trained as an architect at George Washington University. This was followed by art studies at the school of the Corcoran Gallery of Art and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. A fellowship allowed him to study in Paris in the 1920s and 1930s. He returned to the United States at the outset of World War II and subsequently accompanied his good friend and fellow expatriate Henry Miller on the cross-country road trip that inspired Miller’s *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare* (1945), a precursor of Jack Kerouac’s seminal *On the Road* (1957). Rattner taught at the New School in New York in the 1940s and 1950s and then at Yale University. An extensive body of Rattner’s work is housed at the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art at St. Petersburg College, Tarpon Springs, Florida.

Noted for rich color and bold compositions suggestive of his French contemporary Georges Rouault, Rattner is sometimes likened to the Abstract Expressionists since he turned increasingly towards abstraction in the 1950s and 1960s. Like Rouault, during his mature career Rattner was also increasingly absorbed with subjects and compositions that addressed mankind’s suffering and global turmoil.
JON SCHUELER 1916-1992

Night Offering 1976
oil on canvas
54 x 60 inches
Purchase made possible by The Jon Schueler Estate and Sweet Briar College
ACG.2002.004

Born in Milwaukee, Schueler was educated at the University of Wisconsin, earning undergraduate and graduate degrees in economics and English literature. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II and then settled in California in the mid 1940s. After several restless years he decided to pursue art full time and studied at the California School of Fine Arts (now the San Francisco Art Institute) with Clyfford Still and Richard Diebenkorn. He moved to New York in 1951 and then spent a peripatetic period living in a fishing village in Scotland, in Paris, and teaching at Yale University and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

In 1975 he established a home in Mallaig, Scotland. The area’s misty, stormy, ever-changing atmosphere was a profound, continuing source of inspiration. The painter observed, “When I speak of nature, I speak of the sky, because the sky has become all of nature to me.”

KAY WALKINGSTICK born 1953

Mountain Synergy I (Early Spring, Boulder, Colorado) 1992
charcoal on paper
30 x 59 ½ inches
Purchase made possible by the Friends of Art
ACG.1995.003

A member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, WalkingStick has noted that she seeks to emphasize the common ties we all share and that she has spent much of her career exploring the question “What does the earth convey to us metaphorically.” This monumental drawing is typical of her diptych-like compositions in which, throughout her career, she has investigated “the idea of two parts working together in a dialogue.”

WalkingStick was educated at Beaver College (now Arcadia University) and holds an MFA from the Pratt Institute, Brooklyn. She was a professor of art at Cornell University 1988-2005. Among many prestigious fellowships and grants, in recent years she has been honored by a Lee Krasner Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation.

JAMES ABBOTT McNEILL WHISTLER 1834-1903

The Little Putney, No. 1 1879
etching on paper
5 3/16 x 8 1/8 inches
Transfer from Cochran Library; Carnegie Collection
ACG.1976.023

One of the most famous and flamboyant American expatriates and one of the most innovative painters and printmakers of the late 19th century, Whistler began his artistic career as an etcher and it was to this delicate, evocative medium that he returned time after time. Widely traveled in Europe
(his railway engineer father worked for a time in Moscow) even as a child, Whistler enrolled in West Point but flunked out after three years. His first experience with etching came from his work after leaving West Point with the U.S. Coast Survey office in Washington D.C.

Whistler’s interest in delicate atmospheric effects and unusual compositional elements borrowed from Japanese woodblock prints are apparent here in one of the best known views—of a river crossing near London—from his “Thames Suite,” printed just after his bruising and financially draining legal battle with the art critic John Ruskin.

CARL WUERMER 1900-1981
First Snow 1944
oil on canvas
20 x 24 inches
Gift of Mr. Victor Henningsen, Sr.
ACG.1976.029

The artist was born in Münich and immigrated to Chicago as a young man. He trained at the school of the Art Institute of Chicago and then at the Art Students League in New York. This work is typical of his favorite and best-known scenery—precisely delineated, snowy, pastoral panoramas. The utter calm of this idealized rural view seems to the present-day viewer profoundly at odds with the events of 1944 as the world was embroiled in war.

KL 1/25/12; 5/17/12