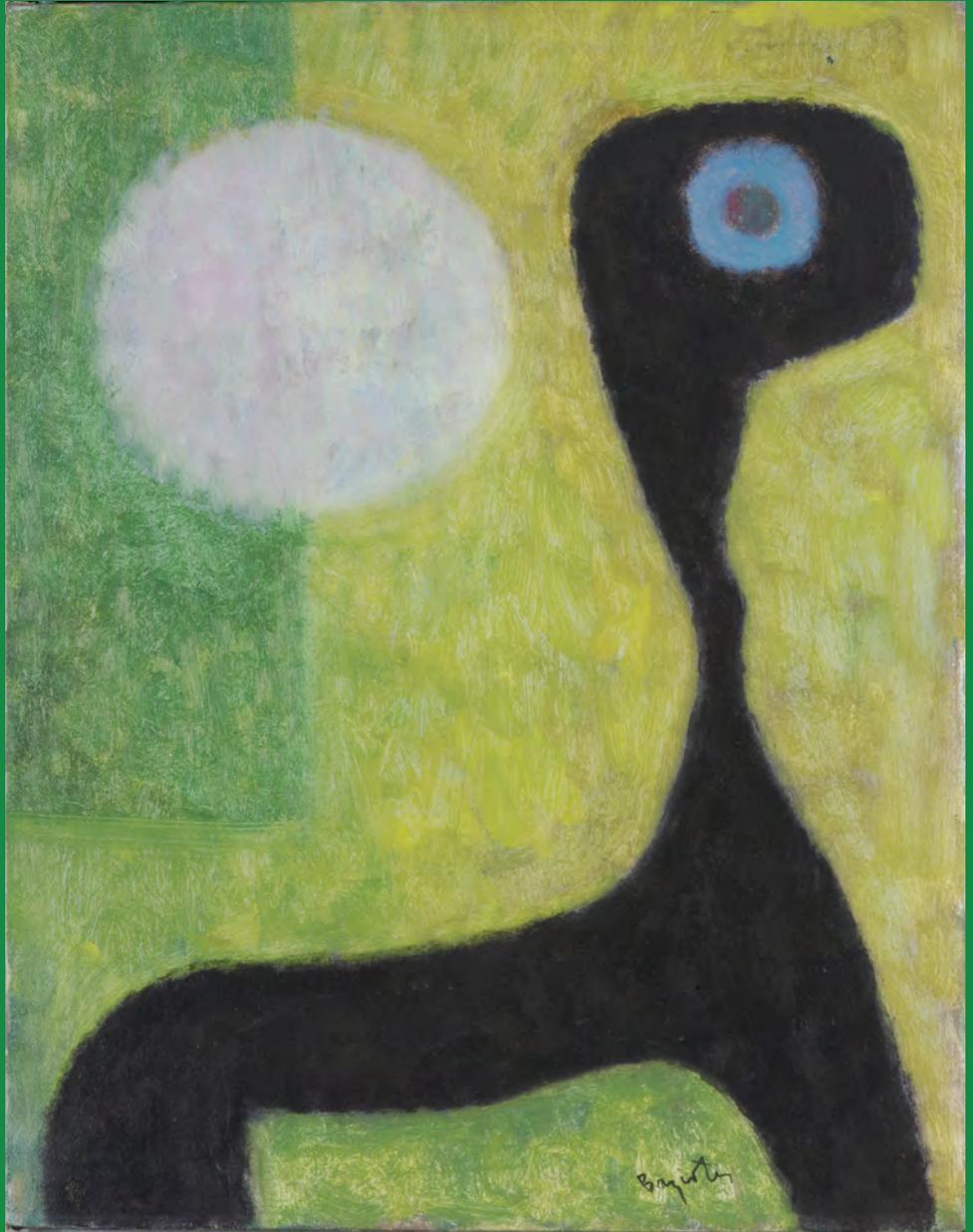


Educator
Resource
Guide

*Prendergast to Pollock:
American Modernism from
the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute*

February 7, 2014 – May 10, 2015



Introduction to *Prendergast to Pollock: American Modernism from the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute*



Maurice B. Prendergast (1858-1924), *Landscape with Figures*, ca. 1912, Oil on canvas, 29 5/8 x 42 7/8 in., Edward W. Root Bequest, 57.212

The exhibition, *Prendergast to Pollock: American Modernism from the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute* features 35 masterworks, drawn from the permanent collection of the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute in Utica, NY. *Prendergast to Pollock* includes important paintings by many of the leading progressive and avant-garde American artists who shaped the history of American art in the first half of the 20th century, including, Charles E. Burchfield (1893-1967), Arthur B. Davies (1862-1928), Arthur G. Dove (1880-1946), Arshile Gorky (1904-48), Edward Hopper (1882-1967), George B. Luks (1866-1933), Reginald Marsh (1898-1954), Jackson Pollock (1912-56), Maurice B. Prendergast (1858-1924), Theodoros Stamos (1922-97), and Mark Tobey (1890-1976). Additional works are drawn from the Everson Museum's permanent collection.

Through these paintings visitors will explore three kinds of traditional artistic subject matter—landscape, still life and figurative work. Other works in the exhibition embody different manifestations of the mid-20th century art movement known as Abstract Expressionism—the first American art movement to receive international recognition and influence. In addition to the iconic beauty of the works in the exhibition, visitors will have an opportunity to observe how leading modern American artists depicted similar representational and abstract subject matter.



Edward Wales Root Ca. 1940
Photography by Carver Wood
(1902-89) Collection of John B.
Root

Many of the paintings in *Prendergast to Pollock* were originally owned by Edward (1884-1956) of Clinton, N.Y., a pioneering collector of

modern American art who, over the course of nearly five decades, kept current with the contemporary art of his lifetime. In 1953 The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City displayed a large selection of works from his collection. This was the first private collection of contemporary

American art ever exhibited at that institution. MWPAI Museum of Art Director D'Ambrosio noted, "Edward Wales Root is among the most important collectors of modern art of his generation. His personal relationships with artists and his keen eye resulted in an exceptionally strong representation of the transformation of the visual arts in the first half of the 20th century."



Edward W. Root in his private, fireproof "pocket gallery" adjacent to the Homestead, Clinton, N.Y., ca. 1950

In 1957 Root bequeathed his large collection of 227 American modernist pictures

ranging in date from 1902 to 1953 by eighty different American artists to the Utica museum. Root's bequest was one of the most important donations of American modernist art in its time. It brought national attention to the fledgling Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute, and profoundly influenced its subsequent collecting activity, its exhibition program, and the Institute's decision to commission architect Philip Johnson (1906-2005) to design his first art museum, which opened to international acclaim in 1960.

This traveling exhibition was organized by the Munson-Williams-

Proctor Arts Institute, Utica, New York. The Henry Luce Foundation provided funding for the conservation of artworks in the exhibition.

Everson presentation made possible by Dr. Paul Phillips and Sharon Sullivan, M&T Bank, Everson Members' Council, Upstate Medical University, Cadaret Grant & Co, Inc, Cannon Pools & Spas, Bonnie and Gary Grossmann, Louise Rosenfield, Catherine J. Winger, and Sedgwick Business Interiors.

VOCABULARY

Abstract: An abstract art work does not contain easily recognizable people, objects or places. What we do see are colors, shapes, forms, lines and sometimes the feeling of movement. Abstract art is more about what it makes you feel than creating a specific narrative or story.

Cityscape: A cityscape is similar to a landscape except it is set in an urban or city environment. The artist will focus on buildings, streets, cars and other common things one sees in a city.

Landscape: A painting, drawing or other art form that typically shows a view of the natural world including elements of the land such as mountains, trees, rivers etc., although

people and animals can be in the landscape as well.

Portrait: A likeness of a person as it appears in a painting, drawing, sculpture and any art form. Artists can choose to make a realistic or representational portrait where s/he tries to make the image look as much like their subject (the person) as possible. Artists can also decide to make the portrait stylized or inspired by their subject. In this case instead of trying to reproduce what their subject looks like, artists can use different colors or shapes to exaggerate a person's features or to express a mood or feeling.

Rural landscape: A landscape featuring fields, hay bales, barns and other things often found on a farm.

Self-portrait: A portrait that the artist makes using him or herself as the subject.

Still life: A still life is a group of objects assembled together often in a painting or drawing. Some still-life art has a theme such as all food items or all objects found in the artist's studio or workspace. Others are random objects chosen by the artist for any number of reasons.

ACTIVITY IDEAS



Edward Hopper (1882-1967), *The Camel's Hump*, 1931, Oil on canvas, Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute, Edward Wales Root Bequest, 57.160

IN THE MUSEUM

Activity 1: Looking & Thinking

Find the landscape, portrait, still life and abstract images in the exhibition. Try to answer the following questions as you come upon each different kind of image.

Landscapes:

What is the weather like?

What time of day is it?

Are there people in the landscape, if so what are they doing?

Portraits:

How old do you think this person is?

Is s/he inside or outside?

Can you tell what clothes s/he is wearing?

Who is this person and do you think this is a self-portrait?

Still life:

What are the objects in this still life?

Why do you think the artist chose these objects?

Do you notice a theme?



Theodoros Stamos (1922-97), *Conversation Piece*, 1948, Oil on Masonite, 20 x 24 in., Edward W. Root Bequest, 57.243

Abstract:

What are some of the shapes and colors you see?

How do these artworks make you feel?

Is there one you like more than the others? If so, why do think that is?

IN THE CLASSROOM OR AT HOME

Activity 2: Portraits



Henry Lee McFee (1886-1953), *Boy*, 1932, Oil on canvas, Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute, Edward Wales Root Bequest, 57.199

Partner with a friend or family member and make portraits of each other!

What materials will you use?

Will you make a collage or drawing or painting or something completely different?

Do you want to make your portrait as realistic as you can or will you be inspired by your portrait partner to make a more stylized, expressive or even abstract portrait?

Activity 3: Still life



Charles Howard (1899-1978), *Wild Park*, 1944, Oil on canvas board, 13 7/8 x 17 7/8 in., Edward W. Root Bequest, 57.163

Choose objects from your classroom, home or outside and assemble them on a table or on the floor to create your own still life. Decide where you want to sit and then draw your still life. When you are done, get up and sit somewhere else, then draw your still life again.

Think about your position in relation to your still life. Are you above it? Below? Far away? Close up?

How does your perspective, or where you are sitting, change how you see and think about your still life?

How are your two drawings different?

CHECKLIST

How are they the similar?

William Bazotes, *Toy*,
Harry Bertoia, *Quadrilaterals*
Ilya Bolotowsky, *Marine Variation no. 2*
Alexander Brook, *The Yellow Fan*
Charles Burchfield, *Dead Sunflower*
Arthur B. Davies, *Inland Tempest*
Preston Dickinson, *Fort George Hill*
Arthur Dove, *No Feather Pillow*
Arthur Dove, *Summer Orchard*
Arthur Dove, *Tree Composition*
Jimmy Ernst, *Honky Tonk*
Lee Gatch, *High Tension Tower*
Arshile Gorky, *Making the Calendar*
Edward Hopper, *The Camel's Hump*
Charles Howard, *Wild Park*
Morris Kantor, *Ode to the Antique*
Yasuo Kuniyoshi, *By the Sea*
Yasuo Kuniyoshi, *Empty Town in Desert*
George B. Luks, *Luxembourg Gardens*,
Paris, no. 3
George B. Luks, *Closing the Café*
George B. Luks, *Mexican Boy*
Peppino Mangravite, *Young Couple Drinking*
Reginald Marsh, *Lower Manhattan*
Reginald Marsh, *Texas Guinan and Her
Gang*
Henry McFee, *Boy*
Jackson Pollock, *No. 34*
Maurice Prendergast, *Landscape with
Figures*
Charles Seliger, *Cross-Section Plant Life*
Charles Seliger, *Untitled no. 1*
Raphael Soyer, *Study for "Sentimental Girl"*
Eugene Speicher, *Brigham's Yard, Kingston*
Theodoros Stamos, *Conversation Piece*
Theodoros Stamos, *Cosmological Battle*
Mark Tobey, *Awakening Night*
Mark Tobey, *Partitions of the City*

RESOURCES

Exhibition Catalog: *Auspicious
Vision: Edward Wales Root and
American Modernism* available for

DOCENT LED TOURS

sale in the Everson Museum Gift
Shop for \$49.95
Hour long docent led tours are
available Wednesday through Friday
10.00am – Noon, free of charge for
school groups K-12. To book a tour,
please contact Qiana Williams,
qwilliams@everson.org or (315) 474
6064 x 303. Please call at least three

RELATED PROGRAMMING

weeks in advance as tour dates book
quickly.

Daily Tours

2pm, Free with exhibition admission

Explore the exhibition *Prendergast to
Pollock: American Modernism from
the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts
Institute* with a Docent. Let the
artwork come to life and join in lively
conversation. Check in at the Visitors
Service desk.

Audio Tour

Take a self-guided tour of
Prendergast to Pollock. Borrow an

iPod from the Visitors Service Desk to learn even more about this extraordinary collection.

Gallery Walk: *Edward Root, Patron of Moderns*

March 5th, 6.30pm

Free with exhibition admission

Join us for an evening exploring *Prendergast to Pollock: American Modernism from the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute* with Mary Murray, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute. Mary will discuss the remarkable life and legacy of collector Edward W. Root. Root supported progressive American painting from 1913, when he bought a Maurice Prendergast composition at the Armory Show, until the 1950s, when he acquired works by Pollock, Rothko, de Kooning, and other members of the New York School. Join us afterward to chat and enjoy light refreshments in the Rosamond Gifford Sculpture Court.

Artful Tales

February 7, March 7, April 11 1.00pm, Free

For children ages 3 and up and their caregivers. Younger siblings welcome! Look, listen and explore! Join us for an afternoon of storytelling and gallery exploration with a Museum docent. Each afternoon focuses on a special theme, making

connections between the picture books and artwork in the Museum. Meet in the Art Zone on the lower level of the Museum. Space is limited, first come first served. To register, contact Kimberly Griffiths, kgriffiths@everson.org, (315) 474 6064 x308

February 7: *Action Jackson* by Jan Greenberg & Sandra Jordan, Illustrated by Robert Andrew Parker

March 7: *Art Dog*, by Thacher Hurd
April 11: *The Pot that Juan Built* by Nancy Andrews-Goebel pictures by David Diaz

Family Day

March 28th, Noon-3pm, Free
Rosamond Gifford Sculpture Court

Explore the galleries and join in art making for the entire family! Drip and splat paint to create an action painting just like Jackson Pollock. Use your imagination to build a curious creature using colorful clay. Make your own 3D still life using tissue paper, pipe cleaners and more. Grab a brush to take part in creating a huge collaborative Paint-by-Numbers mural.

Family Tours

March 28th, Noon, Free
For families with children ages 5-12

Fun for the entire family! Learn all about the Everson in a family friendly

tour with a museum docent. Check out what's new in the galleries and engage in lively conversation about

Educator Resource Center

Visit the ERC to explore a variety of materials available to borrow for classroom use. Browse art objects, games, thematic lessons, DVDs and more as you brainstorm new ideas for the coming year.

Available Wednesday – Friday,
Noon – 5.00pm, by appointment
only. Call the Education
Department (315) 474 6064 or
education@everson.org

Look, Think, Share!

Look, Think, Share is an online space for young and old to look at images from our permanent collection and write about what's going on. Visit everson.org, click on education, then *Look, Think, Share!*

what you see. Check in at the Visitors Service Desk, space limited.

Compiled by the Education
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On cover:
William Baziotes (1912 – 61)
Toy, 1949
Oil on canvas
18 x 24 in.
Edward W. Root Bequest, 57.72