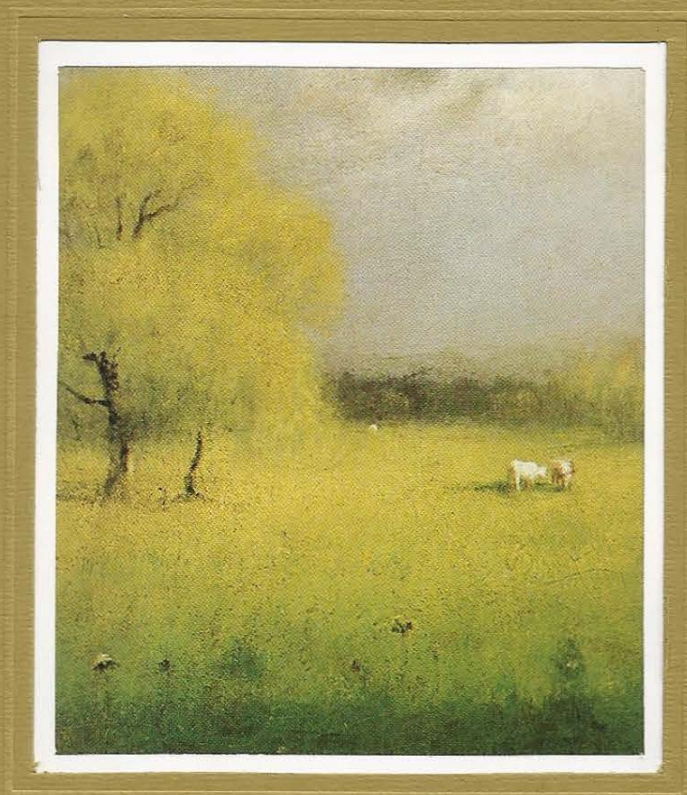


AMERICAN SCENE

THE THOMAS GILCREASE INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN HISTORY AND ART, TULSA, OKLAHOMA



AMERICAN SCENE

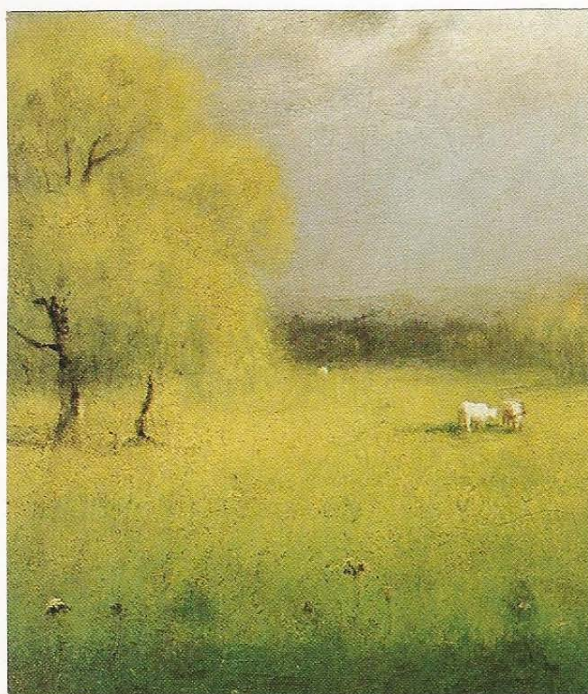
Produced at The Thomas Gilcrease Institute
of American History and Art

Owned and operated by the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma

Robert J. LaFortune, *Mayor*

Cecille L. Bales, *Chairman, Parks and Recreation Board*

William R. Best, *Institute Director*



G. P. Edwards, *Contributor*

Marie E. Keene, *Contributor*

D. M. McPike, *Contributor*

Jeanne O. Snodgrass, *Contributor*

Carolyn Bradshaw, *Contributor*

Oliver Willcox, *Photographer*

Preuss, Phillips & Associates, Inc., *Designer*

R. F. Rodgers Lithographing Co., *Lithographer*

Vol. XV, No. 2 of the American Scene published &
copyrighted by the Thomas Gilcrease Museum
Association, an Oklahoma corporation. ©The Thomas
Gilcrease Museum Association, 1974.

The Thomas Gilcrease Museum Association Executive Committee

Gordon T. Hicks, *Chairman*

Paul H. Johnson, *President*

Mrs. Roger Devlin, *Vice-President*

Lindsay Alexander, *Vice-President*

George O. Nolley, Jr., *Vice-President*

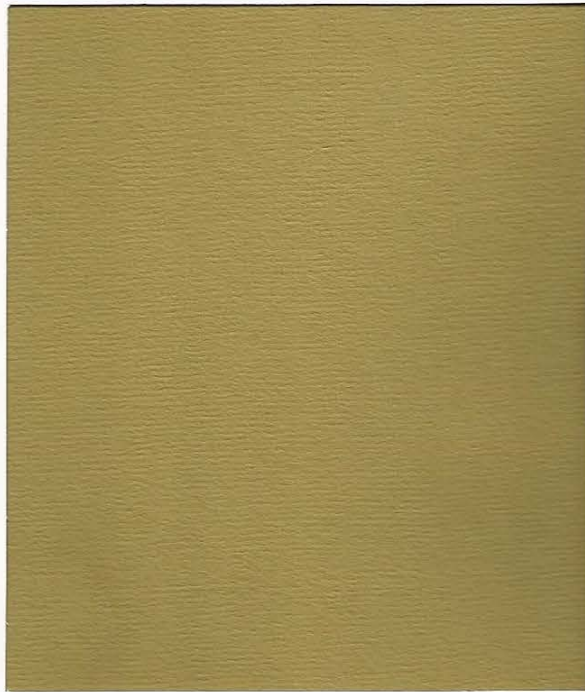
Robert F. Biolchini, *Secretary*

David C. Davies, *Treasurer*

All material reproduced in this issue of the *American
Scene* was derived from the art and library collections
of the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History
and art.

In the first article of this issue we are oriented to the 19th century in American art, and our recently remodeled Gallery Three. Again we are pursuing the practice of coordinating our museum magazine content with gallery activity.

Though rich and varied in its content, this particular gallery of "19th Century American Art" does make an incomplete statement historically and artistically. Here and there are suggested artistic and historical directions to go investigatively. But, there is obviously a limit to how much can be displayed



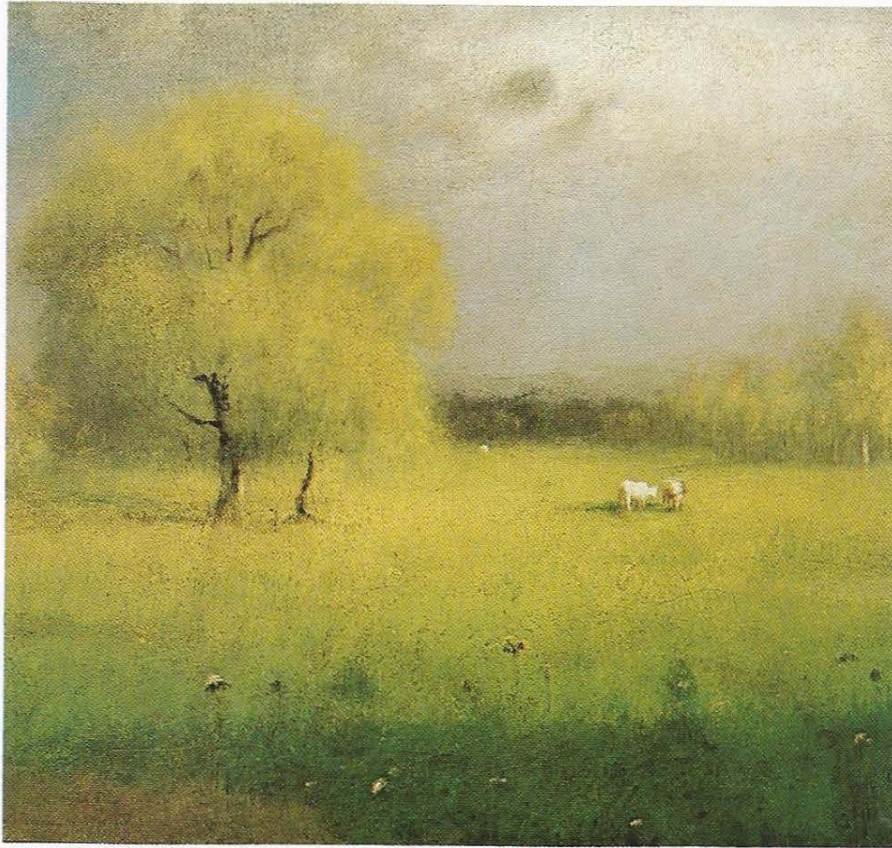
in any one gallery or said in one short article.

Our Gallery Three titling implies too much. Questions are raised. For example, in both gallery and magazine article, there are suggested connections between the worlds of a white and a red American. Both worlds presumably should be examined in terms of their art products under the general heading of 19th Century American Art. But, our Gallery Three deals primarily with the world of the white American, and our first magazine article quite properly follows the lead of the gallery.

Recognition of a feeling of incompleteness here sponsored recent reshapings of certain other gallery areas in our museum. A new gallery setting for 19th and 20th Century Indian Art has been provided. Our total museum picture of "19th Century American Art" is now much closer to being an accurate one, as important portions of our American Indian Art collection are now to be exhibited on a regular rotational basis.

This important gallery event is spotlighted as our second magazine article brings the focus of a new attention to the Gilcrease Collection of Indian Art.

ROMANTICISM

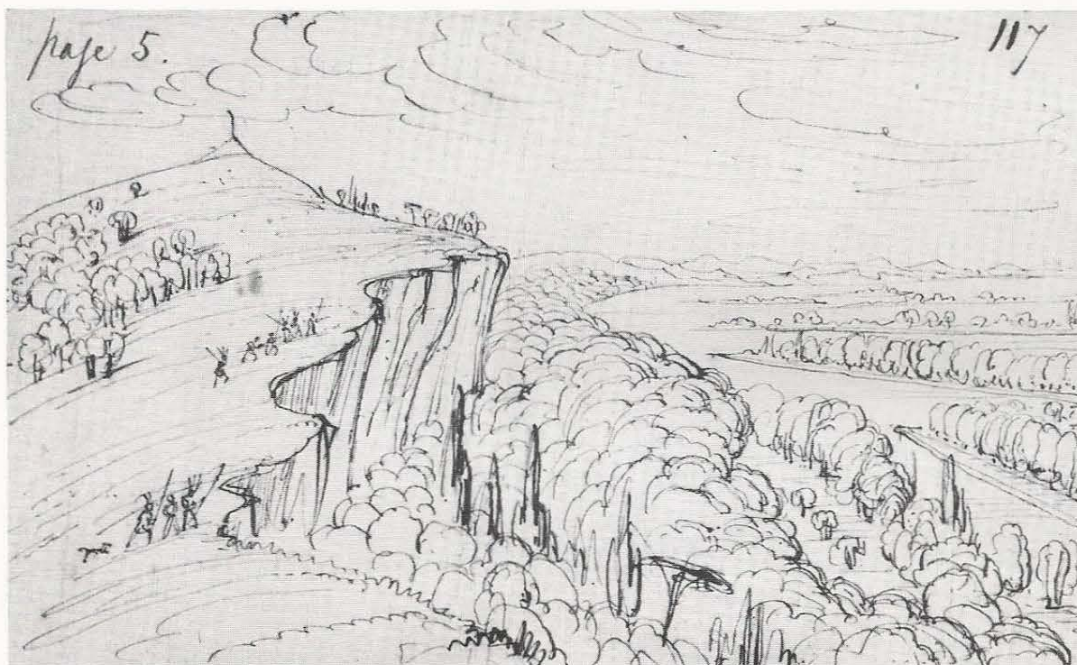


George Inness, New Jersey Landscape

The Romantic Movement of nineteenth century art had a completely different effect upon American artists than it had upon European artists. Romanticism in Europe was so often an attempt to escape from the present-day reality into the past—into a world of Medieval or Oriental enchantment.

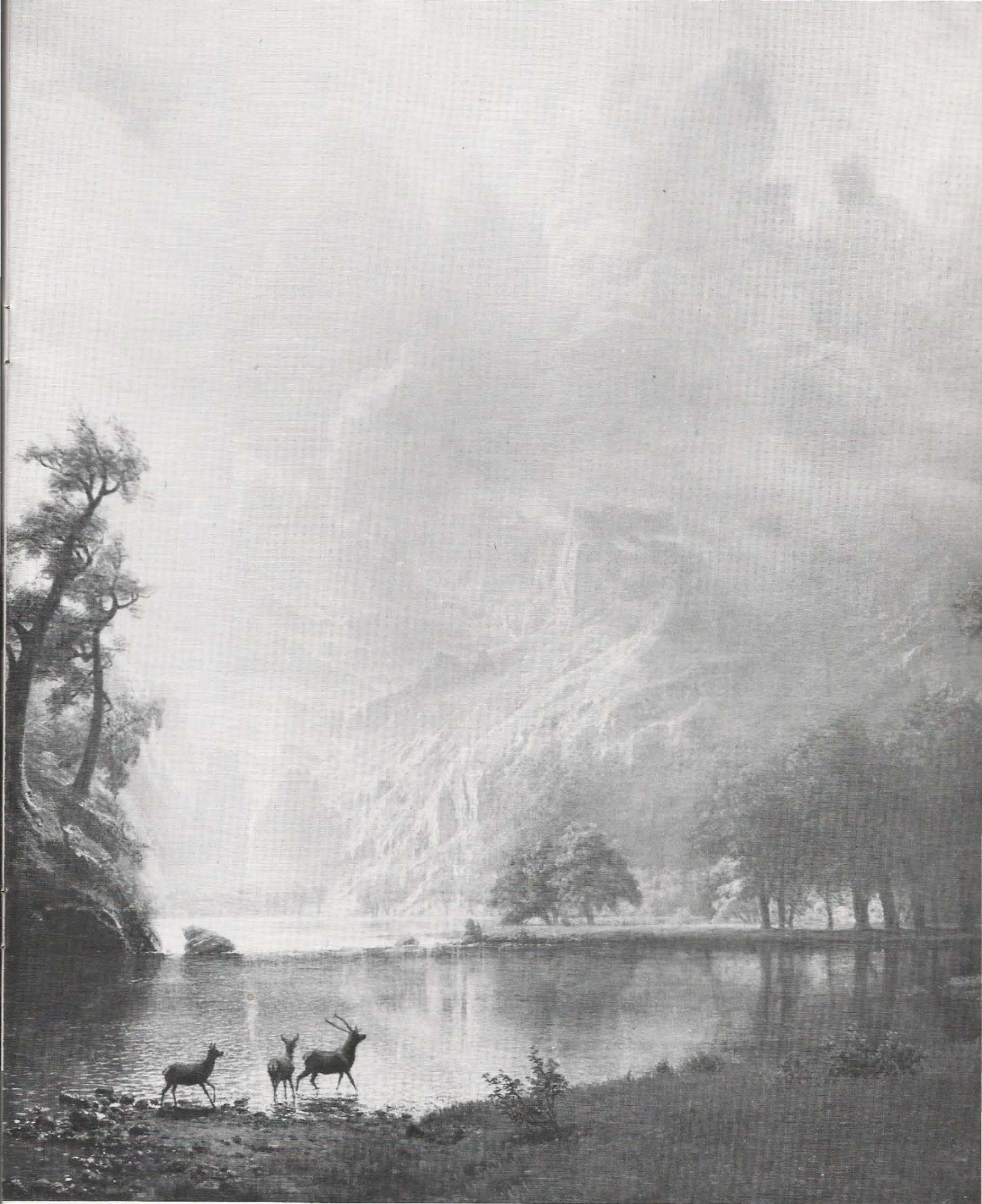
19TH CENTURY ART

American Artists had no need to search for exotic new places or to reject the present in favor of the past. America was a fresh new country and the present was as romantic as the past. American romanticism took the form of exploration rather than nostalgia. American artists suddenly began to respond to their own land and people. Many new vistas stimulated their imagination, and their romantic sense of wonder focused on the world of nature.



George Catlin was painting the grass covered bluffs from a little canoe on the Upper Missouri River long before it became fashionable for American landscapists to work out-of-doors, directly from nature. Until Catlin painted them, the Badlands and the Plains had been unseen by all mankind except for the tribesmen and the fur traders. Greatly influenced by rugged circumstances and the need for speed, he caught the shape of the land in tactile cones and dips. Frequently he would emphasize the rise of a hill by including a curving line of Indians or buffaloes. Usually these are merely suggested by a few quick strokes of the pen. Catlin voiced the fears of many 19th century landscape artists for the vanishing wilderness. "I roamed from hill-top to hill-top, and culled wild flowers, and looked into the valley below me, both up and down, and contemplated the thousand hills and dales that are now carpeted with green, streaked as they will be, with the plough, and yellow with the harvest sheaf, spotted with . . . houses and fences, and groups of hamlets and villas. . . ."

Albert Bierstadt's panoramic paintings of the Rocky Mountains provided thousands of Americans with their first concept of the splendor and vastness of the American West. Frequently, he achieved a dramatic, even emotional, effect by arranging a large cloudy, misty area in the middle distance. Snowy summits and fleecy clouds dazzled behind his heavily painted lush green in the foreground. The viewer is invited to share the peace and serenity of the quiet wilderness with the wildlife in his *Sierra Nevada Morning*.





As the first important American romantic landscapes were being painted, Meriwether Lewis and Captain William Clark were leading an expedition to explore the first overland route across the continent (1804-1806). This wide land and the life men lived upon it became the basis of American romantic art.

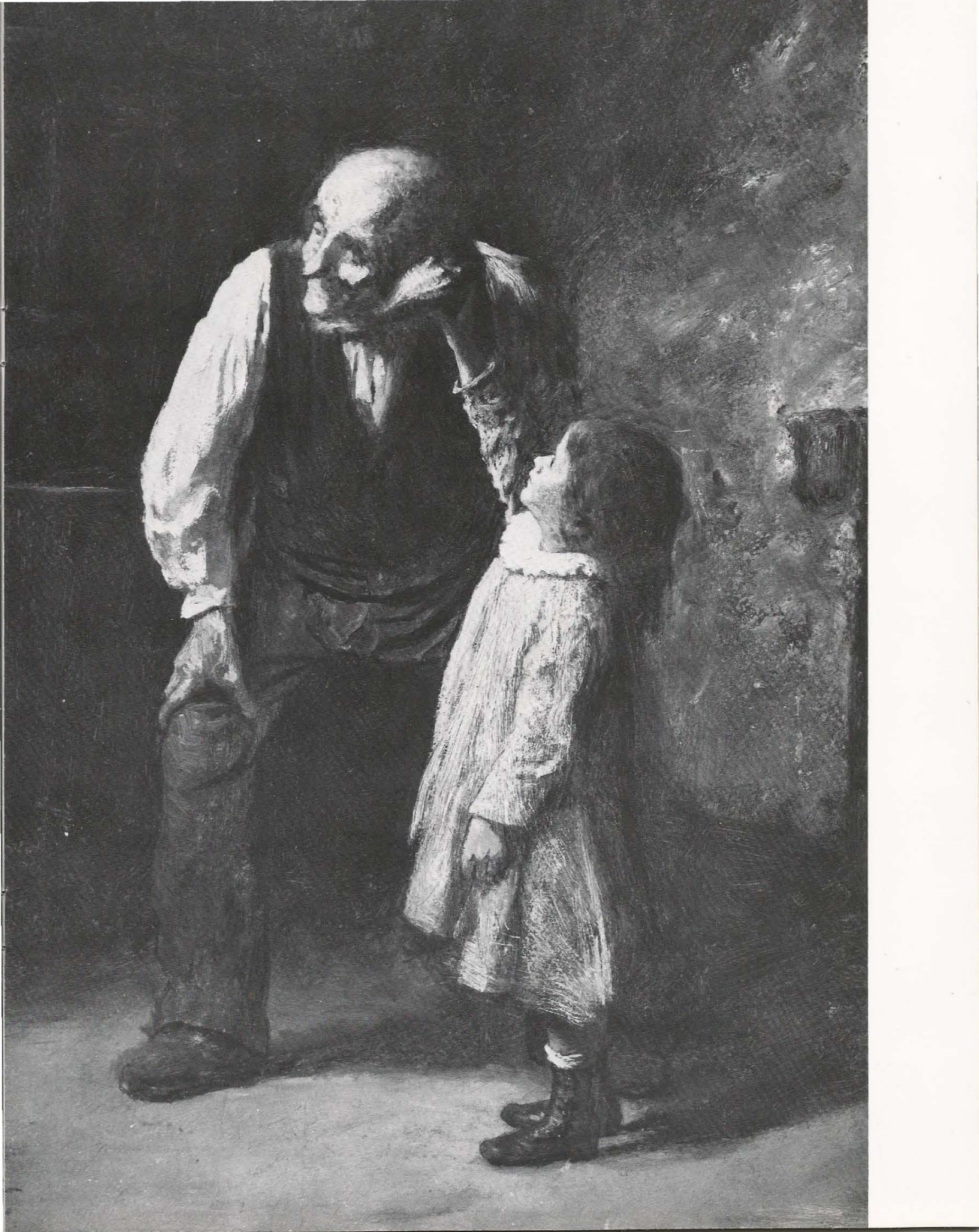
This charming, sentimental anecdote (right) was painted by one of America's most popular genre painters in the 1860's and 1870's, Eastman Johnson. He was strongly influenced by the Dutch masters while studying at The Hague, where he became known as the "American Rembrandt." In "Listening to the Shell" Johnson achieves a fine unity of tone and mood with warm, rich earth hues and intimate lighting. With meticulous attention to rendering details, such as wrinkles in the sleeves and textures of the skin, he captures this incident realistically and informally, yet with warm affection.

Most of the nineteenth century American artists took their basic inspiration, direct and raw, from the pristine wilderness, first in the East and later in the West. The wilderness provided all aspects of nature, especially landscape and wildlife. For the first time, American artists were inspired by people, not only the most sophisticated and prestigious, but ordinary everyday people, going about their ways at work as well as at play.

Some artists were motivated to record the customs of the American Indian. Among others, George Catlin, an untrained artist-anthropologist, realized the historical importance of capturing for posterity the habits and dress of what he considered to be a dying race. With the energy of a man obsessed, Catlin dedicated himself as an instrument of history to the preservation of pictorial and verbal records of the American Indian. His inexhaustible interest in the Indians is paralleled only by John James Audubon's absorption with the birds of North America. Audubon proved to be one of the most talented and energetic American artists in the nineteenth century.

Since a biographical sketch of Audubon was covered in *American Scene* issue Vol. XIV, No. 3, we will not go into that phase of his life again here. It is enough to know that his first love from boyhood on was drawing and studying birds. At age thirty-five, his idea of making and publishing drawings of all the birds of America finally crystallized. His goal was to depict them, life-size, with scientific accuracy against a background of their natural habitat. In 1838, four double elephant folio volumes entitled *The Birds of America from Original Drawings*, with 435 plates showing 1,065 figures was completed. Three years later, the accompanying text, *Ornithological Biography* appeared in five royal octavo volumes.

Although his aim had been for scientific accuracy, his love and enthusiasm for these wild, lovely creatures, and his delight in the mystery and splendor of nature, caused him to emerge as a fine artist but a questionable scientist. Scientists distrusted the force of emotion evoked by his dramatic and beautifully designed portrayals. His drawings reveal his mastery of line and contour. He accomplished his fresh color and texture with a combination of watercolor, pastel, and tempera, often using the white of an egg to add a sheen. One of his oil paintings, *Wild Turkey*, is an excellent example of his translation of this technique into a richer medium.







Frederic Church received an overwhelming public response with this painting of Niagara Falls. His painting of the Falls was exhibited to crowds as a single attraction in a dealer's gallery. The press, with characteristic exaggeration, reported, "All New York flocked to see it." The public could hardly believe that his paint brush could make water appear so wet and the spray sparkle so convincingly. Daringly, Church hardly showed anything but earth and sky. By using a close in vantage point and a horizontal composition he achieved a unique effect of making the spectator feel as if he is standing on the very precipice of the Falls. The painting was so popular a show-piece, that Church made several other versions, and these, too, were eagerly sought after by American and European critics alike. Chromolithographic reproductions sold by the thousands for twenty to thirty dollars a print.

The romantic style of the nineteenth century brought a major change not only in subject matter, but in technique. Underpainting, glazes, and the use of color and light to convey a poetic mood were qualities new to American art.

The artists of this period felt themselves to be portrayers of a new country with a promising future. Beyond the Alleghenies stretched a lonely continent with its endless forest, immense rivers, prairies, and mountains. During the time that Meriwether Lewis and Captain William Clark were leading an expedition to explore the first overland route across the continent, the first American landscapes were being painted. This was a new age in the imaginative eye of artists. They looked about with fresh eyes at the air, earth, and water of this vast half-wilderness country with an intense pride and feeling of nationalism. Nature, which had served only to provide a simple background for human life in the eighteenth century, now became valid artistic subject matter for its own sake. The romantic spirit that inspired the landscape painters, also provided literary subject matter for poets such as William Cullen Bryant, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry David Thoreau who produced such works as *Nature*, *Thanatopsis*, and *Walden*.

THE HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL

It was this romantic mood that gave rise to the Hudson River School of art, a confusing term that has been attached to American romantic landscape artists

of this era. Generally it refers to painters more or less inspired by Thomas Cole and his colleague, Thomas Doughty, who are considered the founders of America's first cohesive school of painting. The Hudson River School loosely includes two generations of landscape painters working in upstate New York and northern New England. However its members wandered far beyond the confines of the Hudson River. For example, Frederick Church, Cole's only pupil, went south as far as the Andes; and Albert Bierstadt focused his efforts on renditions of the Rocky Mountains. Yet both are the undisputed masters of the second generation painters of the Hudson River School. Not only is the title geographically inappropriate, but it fails to recognize the diversity of the individual artists. They did share a common theme—nature. But they were never organized as a group, nor did they have a specific program. However, many of them knew one another and some of them even worked together.

The wilderness which spread itself before Americans, thrilled them with its space, rugged splendor, and its complex variety. In order to capture this image, many of the artists employed the device of a panoramic composition, presenting the spectator with, for example, a vast sweeping view of a valley as seen from a nearby mountainside. Human figures, if present at all, were barely visible, dwarfed by the grandeur of God's handiwork. Their meticulous attention to every minute detail and intricacy in the foreground would seem to suggest the complexity of the universe. Often the paintings seem to reflect more than a vision of the wilderness, but rather broader themes of sentiment both spiritual and romantic.

Many of the Hudson River painters worked out-of-doors and gloried in walking in the forests, climbing mountains, and breathing in the fresh air. They earnestly strove to reproduce an exact rendering of nature—to produce a perfect imitation of color and form, exactly as they saw it.

It was about this same time that settlers were pouring westward. By 1830, one-third of all Americans lived west of the Appalachians. Some of the landscape artists feared defilement of the continent would result. Many artists felt challenged to leave a precise recording of American nature before it was desecrated by the onward

march of civilization and industrialization.

Probably one of the most popular of the romantic paintings in the Gilcrease Collection, Albert Bierstadt's *Sierra Nevada Morning*, reflects the artist's intense feeling for the wilderness. Typical among the painters of this time, Bierstadt emphasizes the theatrical grandeur of breathtaking scenery. The atmospheric glow to the canvas seems to radiate awe and reverence.

In this painting, it is easy to see the painter's vision of America as a land of rich and unlimited opportunity. Out of this vision grew the illusion of "manifest destiny"—the belief that a glorious future for the nation was foretold everywhere and was evident in the land itself. With this went the concept that the land was designed to be used and controlled by the men to whom God had entrusted it.

Painting was probably more popular in the mid-nineteenth century than at any other time in our history. In 1838, an English critic, Mrs. Anna Jameson was prompted to write about her visit here: "*While in America I was struck by the manner in which the imaginative talent of the people had thrown itself forth into painting; the country seemed to swarm with painters.*"

For the first time, to be an artist in the United States was not a financial hazard. Any fairly competent artist could sell his work; the accomplished ones could not only become wealthy, but could also become prominent citizens. Before this time, the leading art collectors were interested in acquiring paintings from abroad by already famous masters. Now, the interest had shifted to works by living American artists. Even the less affluent citizens bought American paintings to a large extent, a trend that continued for almost two generations.

One artist, who received an overwhelming public response was Frederick Edwin Church. His painting of *Niagara Falls* created quite a sensation in New York. Church had already achieved an excellent reputation with his painting called *Heart of the Andes*, but it was his painting of Niagara Falls that won him his greatest acclaim. Although the Falls had inspired artists before him, Church was particularly suited to record the stupendous wonder. The public could hardly believe that his paint brush could make the water appear so wet

Reflecting the typical attitude of young American artists during the excitement of impressionism painting, when William Merritt Chase was asked if he would like to study abroad, he replied, "My God, I'd rather go to Europe than to go to Heaven!" When he returned to America, he had absorbed the brilliant palette of the impressionist painting along with the dashing bravura displays of Munich brushwork as shown here by *On the Beach*. He was greatly admired by students and art patrons. Possibly, he was one of the most influential artists in transplanting these new techniques in America.





and the spray sparkle so convincingly. When it was exhibited in a gallery on lower Broadway in New York City in 1857, the press, with characteristic exaggeration reported, "All New York flocked to see it!" Still this monumental piece of work—seven feet by three feet—is considered by many to be his masterpiece. After it was reproduced by chromolithography, it sold for twenty to thirty dollars a print and was purchased by thousands of art lovers.

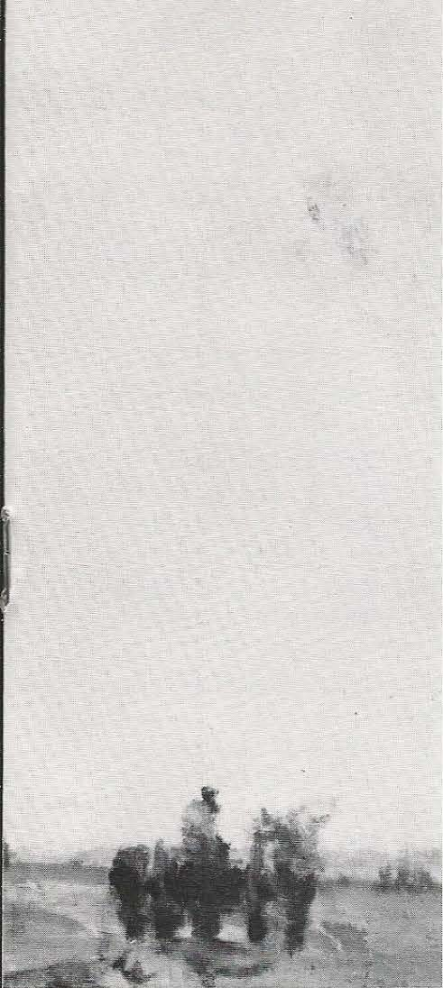
The New York *Albion* in May, 1857, called it: "Incontestably the finest oil picture ever painted this side of the Atlantic. . . ." Later when the painting was sent abroad, the European critics were so favorably impressed, it was awarded a second medal at the Paris Exhibition in 1867. Even in Europe it was believed that *Niagara Falls* marked the beginning of a new era in American art, one which could rival the masterpieces abroad.

Niagara Falls had inspired a number of artists before Church, but he achieved a unique effect by using a close-in vantage point and a horizontal composition. These devices make the spectator feel he is on the very precipice of the Falls.

Church considered himself to be a scientific recorder. He firmly believed that "high art" was made by strict adherence to facts. He felt subject matter could be filtered and rearranged by the eye, but the image should go directly from the eye to the painter's hand without passing through the heart. However, today he is considered a romantic naturalist, for his paintings do evoke an emotional appeal.

Unfortunately, his career was cut short—his right arm was paralyzed by inflammatory rheumatism. He learned to paint with his left arm until that too became crippled. However, today his work continues to hold an eminent position among the Hudson River School paintings.

While many artists were in the West concentrating on landscapes, some remained in the East earning a reliable income by painting portraits of prominent contemporaries. Still others chose genre painting—ordinary people shown in everyday activities of work and play. This gentle, story-telling art reached its height of popularity in America at this time. Genre painting appealed to common folk. They could understand and even identify with the characters depicted in the paintings. The rising new middle class became



The violent drama of man's struggle against the sea appealed to and suited the nature of Winslow Homer, a passionate observer of nature. In this painting, *Watching the Breakers*, Homer depicts the coarsely clad, robust forms of fisherman's wives or daughters as they stand on bleak, jagged cliffs watching the furious waves break against the rocks. In an impersonal manner, Homer captures the mystery of human destiny.

John Singer Sargent was a major figure in the Paris-trained generation of artists in the 1870's. His brilliance and his cool detachment are demonstrated in *On the Coast of Brittany*. His use of luminous gray and brown tonality, applied in dashing brushstrokes create a swimming effect of light.

powerful patrons of the arts. Although many were quite wealthy, they were untraveled and unexposed to classical education. Their tastes were more likely to be simple and domestic and unconcerned with "high art"

Eastman Johnson was probably the most popular genre painter in America during the 1860's and 1870's. Although portraiture occupied a large portion of his time and provided his income, he is best known for his charming pastoral scenes. Johnson was born in rural Maine, the son of a successful politician. The elder Johnson, recognizing his son's talent for drawing, apprenticed him to a lithographer in Boston. Young Eastman soon grew dissatisfied with lithography and began drawing portraits in crayon. By the time he was eighteen, he was quite a successful portraitist. He then studied in Düsseldorf and The Hague for several years. Strongly influenced by the Dutch masters, and while at The Hague, he became known as the "American Rembrandt"

Later he did a series of paintings depicting Indian life in the Midwest, maple-sugaring in New England, and corn-husking in Nantucket. Johnson's purpose was neither documentary nor of a commentary nature—

he was simply interested in people for visual purposes. He was an excellent draftsman with an eye for tonality and a master in handling the brush. His primary concern was with the play of light upon people and objects which is apparent in his *Listening to the Shell*. His warm affection for simple human life also emerges in this delightful painting.

Two major figures of nineteenth century art, Winslow Homer and Thomas Eakins, also devoted their attention to genre painting. However their work was far removed from the fashionable mode of painting that appealed to the cosmopolitan tastes of their day. These two independents saw life from their own point of view in space and time, and each one created a new technique from his own personal vision.

Their independence did not mean that they turned their backs to the traditional or conventional methods in art. Both Homer and Eakins traveled or studied abroad, and the luminous simplicity in their work indicates that they were approaching, each in his own way, the colorist style that was flourishing at that moment in Europe. However, both men relied upon American experiences for subject matter.

This portrait of Frank Hamilton Cushing, noted anthropologist, reveals Thomas Eakins' power of acute observation and his insight into the character of the sitter. What Eakins learned through science, he applied to his art. He firmly believed that accurate knowledge of anatomy was the basis of intelligent rendering of character. Although many of Eakins' clients found his versions of themselves unflattering, he was probably quite satisfied with them if they closely adhered to reality. He is quoted as having said: "How beautiful an old lady's skin is. All those wrinkles!"



At nineteen, Winslow Homer was apprenticed to a lithographer for two years. Afterwards he vowed he would never work for anyone again. For the next seventeen years he worked as a free-lance illustrator, mostly for *Harper's Weekly*. During the Civil War, he went south with the Union Armies and recorded army life where he learned to work effectively with clear-cut outlines and broad planes that would easily translate into black and white woodcuts used to make illustrations. His illustrations grew more powerful and convincing through effective massing of lights and darks, and the use of expressive and energetic line.

In the 1870's, he discovered watercolor, a medium well suited to his talent and desire to paint out-of-doors. It allowed for quick execution and he was able to achieve the fresh transparent qualities of light he desired. Homer's main interest was painting human life in the sunlight. And like Johnson, he preferred the simple unaffected element of humanity: children on farms, soldiers in camp, young girls on the beach. Although his subject matter is sometimes sentimental, Homer's paintings are never spoiled by being overly sweet — the failing of some nineteenth century genre painters.

Homer went to the bleak North Sea coast of England in 1881 to live and paint in solitude. When he returned and settled at Prout's Neck on the coast of Maine, his work had changed. The dominant theme became the power and loneliness of the sea and the wilderness, and man's struggle against the elements. These scenes Homer painted with force and authority.

In his own personal style, Homer's works were created from his own vision of America. Critics now consider his landscapes and seascapes to be some of the most original and finest of his day.

Like Homer, Thomas Eakins was a careful observer of nature. He chose to confront directly and objectively what he saw and paint it realistically. After studying in France, Eakins returned to America and taught drawing and painting at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, introducing a revolutionary method of teaching figure drawing. Instead of the

traditional plaster casts, he used a live nude model. This method of teaching met with heated opposition, and Eakins was fired.

The camera had made Eakins extremely aware of reality and the effects of light. He had a searching, scientific mind, and from observing medical operations and autopsies, he had acquired considerable anatomical knowledge and insisted on utilizing this knowledge in teaching. He was embittered by his rejection but continued to paint admirably—always insisting upon uncompromising honesty. Two of his major paintings, *The Gross Clinic* (1875), and *The Agnew Clinic* of 1889, were rejected as disgusting and offensive. Today, some critics consider these paintings to be the finest produced in nineteenth century America. He devoted several years to sporting scenes, then turned to portraiture. Many of those who sat for him were either from a creative field or from the field of science. His painting of the American ethnologist, Frank Hamilton Cushing, reveals his ability to capture the character as well as the appearance of the sitter.

In the closing decades of the nineteenth century, Munich, Düsseldorf, and Paris were the most popular centers for American students. Painting in Europe, particularly in France, was entering one of its most brilliant periods. It was only natural that American painters responded with an eager desire to learn these techniques from their gifted contemporaries. The habit of studying abroad was certainly not new, but it became more prevalent during the 1870's.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler is probably one of the most striking of the American artists to follow the avant-garde styles of Europe. He was a trend-setter of many of the distinctive traits of the Bohemian cult. Flamboyant, self-confident, and cosmopolitan, with a cultivated taste for the exotic, he was perhaps best known for his association with the "art for art's sake" movement.

Although greatly influenced by his contemporaries, the Impressionists of Paris, he made his own personal discoveries and innovations. The Impressionists were

lovers of sunlight; Whistler was unique in his interest in twilight and night. He began to call his works "symphonies" or "arrangements" to emphasize the formal, decorative harmony he was seeking to convey. His landscape and seascape paintings were almost lyrical. In fact, he painted a twilight and darkness series each of which he entitled *Nocturne*. Whistler anticipated the direction twentieth century art would take.

Probably the most successful of all American painters to transplant European styles was William Merritt Chase. He studied in Munich, visited Italy, then returned to America. His portraits, still-lives, and landscapes were a combination of the bright colors of Paris, and the dashing brushwork of Munich—an artistic blend perfectly suited to the taste of American patrons.

John Singer Sargent, another expatriate painter, also enjoyed enormous success. His vigorous and dramatic handling of brushwork resembled that of Chase, but his paintings were bolder in design and subtler in lighting. His technical virtuosity is evident in *On the Coast of Brittany*.

Landscapes did not cease to be important in American painting in the latter part of the nineteenth century, although they were not as predominant as they had been during the middle years. George Inness' work reflects the general development of landscape painting in the last decade of the century. As a part of the Romantic movement in the first half of his career, he tried to incorporate the majesty of the American scene with an atmosphere of the rural serenity which he had admired in the work of the French Barbizon artists. In his later years, Inness completely abandoned drawing in favor of light, air, broken color, and soft dreamy effects as seen in *New Jersey Landscape*. Inness always insisted he had evolved this "impressionistic" style independently.

The Romantic vision of America reached a climax in the first half of the nineteenth century. Thereafter it continued to survive—not as a cohesive tendency in art, but in the minds of the individual artists.

The Paintings of the Southwestern and Plains Indian

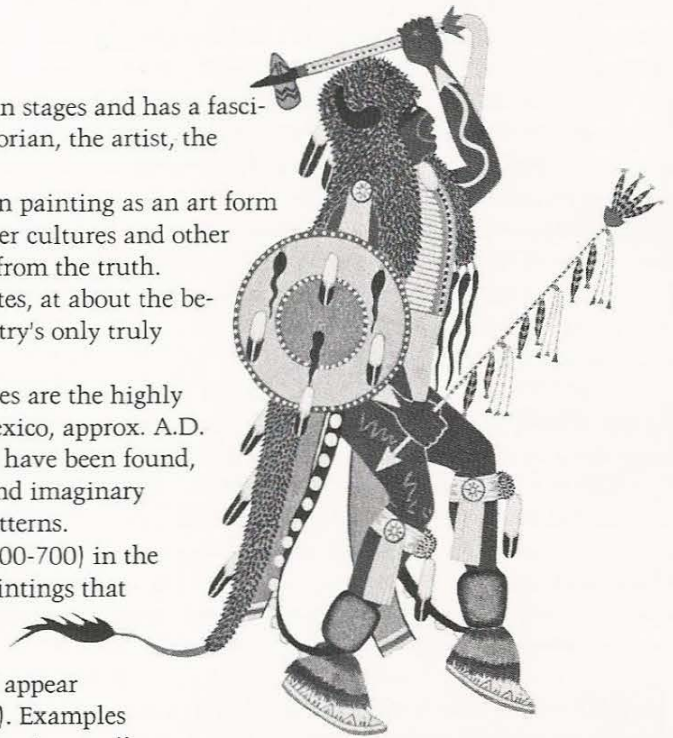
Indian painting has evolved quite naturally and in stages and has a fascinating history which can be of interest to the historian, the artist, the anthropologist, and the hobbyist alike.

There are those who will say American Indian painting as an art form evolved totally from Indian assimilation with other cultures and other schools of painting. Yet nothing could be further from the truth.

In the southwestern section of the United States, at about the beginning of the Christian era, a phase in this country's only truly indigenous art was being born. (*Tanner, '48*).

Among the finest and earliest known examples are the highly sophisticated designs found on Mimbres (New Mexico, approx. A.D. 950-1300) pottery. Although hundreds of designs have been found, there are no two alike. They represent both real and imaginary life-forms as well as superbly stylized, abstract patterns.

As early as the Basketmaker period (c. A.D. 200-700) in the Southwest, there were mural-like pictographic paintings that portrayed life forms in varying degrees from abstract to fairly natural-like renderings. Murals in the true sense actually did not appear until the Great Pueblo Period (c. A.D. 1100-1300). Examples of these where earth colors had been used were found on walls at



Jack Hokeah, Buffalo Dancer

Kayenta, Aztec, and Mesa Verde. In New Mexico, near the small town of Bernalillo, the prehistoric Pueblo site of Kuaua has been studied extensively and found to have had at least eighty-five different plasterings on the Kiva walls. Of these, seventeen were found to be painted in a mural-like style. "Here, upon the kiva walls, the all-over effect of certain upright mural patterns is strikingly like that of the sandpaintings lying flat on the ceremonial hogan floor. Parallels in the two arts can be followed from large forms to small details in many instances. The colors ranging from white through the natural blues, greens, yellows, reds, browns to black, are fairly evenly stroked upon the adobe plaster background, producing a fresco appearance, although not absolutely true fresco. The technique gives an entirely flat and two-dimensional appearance with the exception of the occasional naturalistic indication of a deep concavity—possibly the representation of a shrine or a sipapu" (Dunn, '51).

Traditionally in Indian painting there is an absence of a third dimension, the figures seem to be suspended in motion and they are flat. It is unlike any other system of design. It is far-fetched to believe, as some do, that it resembles Chinese or Japanese art, and it most certainly is far removed from primitive European styles. The only possible analogies are drawings originating in India, but here again one would have to stretch the imagination considerably.

The lack of appreciation and understanding of Indian painting is traced back to the sixteenth century when probably the first non-Indian saw this unique art. In 1598, Captain Gaspar Perez de Villagr  served as historian for the Spanish expedition under the command of Juan de O ate. Villagr 's description of Pueblo mural painting could just as well be those seen at Kuaua. He says:

"On the walls of the rooms where we were quartered were many paintings of the demons they worship as gods. Fierce and terrible were their features. It was easy to understand the meaning of these, for the god of the water was near the water, the god of the mountains was near the mountains, and in like manner all those dieties they adore, their gods of the hunt, crops, and other things they have." (Villagr , '33).

Other outsiders who closely observed the Pueblo culture were the Navajo. These people of the Athapaskan linguistic stock, migrated from the interior of Alaska and are considered late arrivals to the Southwest. According to legend they were poor nomads in the early days and this explains why they had very few arts of their own. However, by 1630, when the Spanish first mentioned the Navajo, it seems they had received considerable respect as farmers. It is even recorded that "Navajo signifies great planted fields."



Velino Herrera, Zia, Going for Water

(Dunn, '68). Before the Pueblo rebellion of 1680, and even more so afterwards, the Navajo adapted many of the Pueblo ways to their own life-style. It is from this contact that the Navajo became the masters of Southwestern drypainting—or sandpainting. To enter into a long explanation of this art form one must have made lengthy studies over many years. A short survey, however, does seem vastly important since it greatly influences the contemporary Navajo painter. Sandpainting is a visual rendering of all that Navajo religion represents. Most often sandpaintings are created on a bed of sand on a hogan floor. They may be as small as twelve inches wide or as large as twenty feet. Various pigments are obtained by pulverizing such things as sandstone, charcoal, corn,

and pollen. One or more persons may work on the designs at the same time. Held between the forefinger and the thumb, the colored sands and other pigments are released in an even, steady flow to form the tribal designs which call for blessings such as good health and ample rain, while others may be used to deter evil elements. Authentic sandpaintings are never retained; they are destroyed after serving their purpose. Fortunately, replicas, or adaptations, have been made and we are able to see and appreciate their majesty and precision of color and design.

One sandpainting adaptation in the Gilcrease Collections is *Corn People*, from *Shooting Chant*. In this unique design, the Corn People wear Sun's House striped masks, or paint their faces. They carry gourd

Quincy Tahoma, *In the Days of the Stagecoach*



rattles and corn. The figures are rooted in the clouds and the bar below them represents the earth filled with seeds. The "guardian" around three sides is the Rainbow supernatural, or "goddess" (Wyman, '67).

Eastward from the lands occupied by the Pueblo people and Navajo, the Spanish Conquistadores found other Indians with different ways and with their own striking art forms. These Indians followed the great herds of buffalo. Villagr  said of these men: *"They are well-built, intelligent people who live in tents made of the skins of the buffalo. So skilled are they in the art of tanning, that even after these skins have become wet they dry as soft as linen . . ."* (Villagr , '33).

The arrival of the Spaniards on the Plains drastically changed the life of the Indians in the area. By 1700, these tribes were mobile in a way they had never been previously, and it was all because they were introduced to the horse by the Spaniards. Even in their accelerated nomadic life, the buffalo remained all-important. It continued to provide them with nearly everything they needed to exist, including clothing. As early as 1540, Coronado wrote of having seen the painted robes made and worn by Plains Indians. Yet little is known of Plains painting before the nineteenth century.

In 1833, the German naturalist, Prince Maximilian of Wied, set out on a thirteen-month scientific expedition from St. Louis into the region of the Upper Missouri. Accompanying him was the young Swiss artist, Karl Bodmer. While Maximilian wrote detailed observations of America and its Indians, Bodmer recorded in the media of pencil and watercolor. They saw and recorded most of the painted objects made by Indians of the area—the tipi, war shield, parfleche, and the moccasins. They found that the men excelled in painting scenes of their own exploits and involving other men and horses, while the women confined their achievements to abstract, geometric designs in red, yellow, green, and blue. Maximilian described the painted hides as:

" . . . representations of their warlike exploits, in black, red, green, and yellow. The figures represent the taking of prisoners, dead or wounded enemies, captured arms and horses . . . and such subjects.

Other robes . . . have a white ground, and black figures, especially of animals; others have a white ground, with representations of their heroic deeds in black, or in gay colors, with the wounds they received, the loss of blood, the killed, the prisoners, the arms they have taken, the horses stolen (the number of which is indicated by the number of horseshoes), in black, red, green, or yellow figures, executed in their yet rude style of painting. The nations on the Missouri are all in the habit of painting such robes; but the Pawnees, Mandans, Minitaries, and Crows, are the most skillful in this art. Another mode of painting their robes is, to represent the number of valuable presents they have made. By these presents, which are often of great value, they acquire reputation and respect among their countrymen." (Maximilian, '06).

Colors for the artists' palette came from various sources and included ". . . red from savoyenne root and buffalo berries, purple from chokeberries, yellow from lichens, green from the juice of yellow poplar leaves, and black from the ehlianthus. There were colors from other sources, depending on the locality" (Dunn, '68). Similar to the Southwest artisan, the Plains artist pulverized the colors by using stone mortars. The paints were often applied with pieces of porous bone, using different sizes and shapes to produce the desired pattern.

Not to be overlooked are the works on paper by Plains Indians from southwestern Oklahoma in 1875. These men were among those who were alleged to have participated in the killing of several groups of whites. Without benefit of trial, chiefs and warriors were chosen by the United States Government to be sent to prison at Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida, along with other prisoners from the area. As part of their male Indian heritage of portraying people and events, a few from the group executed another form of indigenous art which reflects little outside influence. In most instances it is strongly delineated, and unrestrained, and portrays events in the memory of the artist as well as many objects and events seen for the first time, i.e., long trains, a massive fort with guns mounted on the walls, sailing yachts, and sharks. (Cohoe, '64). During the same period and particularly in February of 1879, at Fort Reno, Indian Territory (Oklahoma), H. M. Creel of the 7th United States Cavalry and in detached service with Cheyenne Indians, collected drawings which are labeled the "Cheyenne method of recording history." These drawings, in the Gilcrease Library, are in a common ledger. Ledgers used for this purpose are not uncommon. Usually biographical in nature, they convey through the use of colored pencils, and/or watercolors, the exploits and daily activities in the life of the man who drew them. The symbols for horses (horseshoe prints) are seen in the drawing just as Maximilian had seen them used.

By 1900, the traders, soldiers, and anthropologists were providing the Indians of both areas with different art media. Muslin and paper replaced animal skins and Pueblo walls; camel hair brushes and pencils replaced the bone brush; and colored pencils and watercolors replaced native paints.

The noted ethnologist, Jesse Walter Fewkes, engaged three Hopi men, White-Bear, Homovi, and Winuta, in 1900, to make paintings of Hopi Kachinas for his study of the subject. White-Bear could speak some English because of a short period of schooling; his uncle Homovi, and Winuta, however, could not speak English. These paintings by these men appear in three volumes published by the Bureau of American Ethnology and are

the *Codex Hopiensis*. They are considered one of America's finest collections of aboriginal art.

As the Indian and white man came in contact more frequently, a succession of scattered reports appeared which told of newly discovered artistic talents in the Indian population.

There was an Indian school teacher at San Ildefonso Pueblo, in 1911, who was encouraging her pupils to express themselves in watercolor and crayon by painting subjects familiar to them (*Tanner, '50*). Their early works show some variety in technique and evidence of outstanding ability in drawing and in depicting detail. By 1920, the "San Ildefonso Movement" was making history in the art circles with paintings by such people as Awa Tsireh, Julian Martinez, and Crescencio Martinez. Crescencio first began to draw before 1910, when Dr. Edgar L. Hewett found him using the ends of cardboard boxes and gave him paper and watercolors. Before this phase, the artist was known to have painted pottery. After receiving Dr. Hewett's gift, he painted on paper extensively. Although his career lasted only two years, he nearly completed a series of outstanding paintings for the School of American Research and the Museum of New Mexico, depicting all the costumed dances of San Ildefonso's summer and winter ceremonies.

Julian Martinez, along with other men from San Ildefonso, had been hired to help with diggings conducted by the School of American Research in 1907 at Pajarito Plateau. It was then that he saw for the first time ancient drawings on cave walls and tried his hand at painting. As a result of that expedition, his wife Maria was asked if she could duplicate a thin grey pottery type which had been found there. The shard was decorated with fine black lines. For an entire winter, Maria and Julian worked jointly in an effort to discover the method of making the pottery. The following summer, the expedition returned to find the couple had succeeded and as a result of his interest in copying the cave paintings, Julian had ventured to decorate the sample pottery. Throughout the remainder of his life, until his death in 1943, Julian decorated most of Maria's pottery. The pieces signed by the two of them are highly sought after collector's items. Julian did not confine his designing only to pottery. He contributed paintings in watercolor, representing the Pueblo life-style, just as Crescencio and Awa Tsireh. Although Julian experimented with styles, his forte remained the controlled, dignified designs of the kind seen in his *Abstract Design*. Dr. Hewett said this new art form was as "... distinctly racial as Japanese art. A renaissance is under way which

is destined to bring back an art that is unmatched in the culture history of the world—a unique racial product" (*Dunn, '51*). Dr. Hewett considered Crescencio the "first" painter of the new movement and referred to Fred Kabotie (Hopi), and Ma-Pe-Wi (Velino Herrera, Zia), as among the most noted painters of the period. Ma-Pe-Wi was born in 1902 in New Mexico. He attended school at the Santa Fe Indian School in the 1920's but never received formal art training because the school had no art department. He has credited Dr. Hewett with getting him started in the art field although others, such as Mr. and Mrs. John D. DeHuff, also helped. While he served as Superintendent at the Santa Fe school, Mr. DeHuff gave encouragement, and studio space in his home after class, to Ma-Pe-Wi and Kabotie and other artists. Ma-Pe-Wi became one of the most prolific of all Indian painters. His work displays the gentleness of the Pueblo people in a wide variety of daily and ceremonial activities. His brushwork is flawless in portrayals of textures such as ceramic ollas, woven belts, tanned boots, and even the blue-black glistening hair of his people. His *Going for Water* is a good example. His paintings almost always incorporate symbolism in a formally balanced all-over design. A fellow artist described Ma-Pe-Wi as a "singing artist"—one would know which ceremony he was painting by the song he sang at the drawing board. It was a great loss to the art world when, in the 1950's, he was gravely injured in an auto accident and ceased to paint.

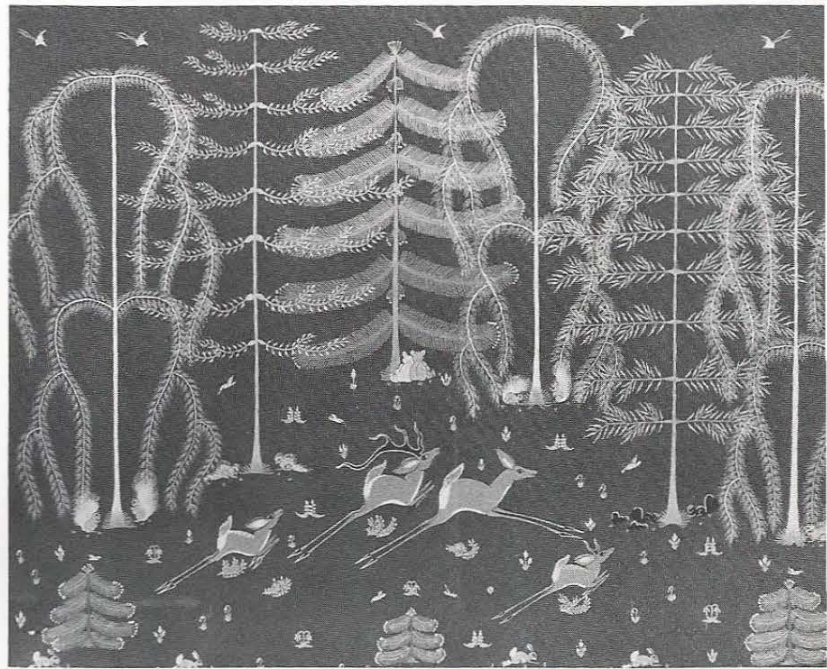
Fred Kabotie (Hopi), was born in 1900 in Arizona. In 1906, Kabotie's family, seeking to escape the efforts of the Government to force them to abandon their customs, joined other Hopis of old Oraibi and established Hotevilla. Eventually they were forced to return to Oraibi and Shungopovi, where in 1913, the children were placed in schools for the first time. Later, as a disciplinary measure, Kabotie was sent to Santa Fe Indian School. There he was encouraged by the DeHuffs to develop his artistic talents but he never received academic art training there. His formal arrangements of village life, and particularly their dances, have never been equalled by other Hopi painters. He is known for filling the paper as he has done in *Hopi Social Dance*. In the background people sit and stand on the multi-storied Pueblo while they watch the male and female dancers and the drummer and singers. His use of perspective and strong color is the exception in Pueblo painting. His name is sure to appear wherever Indian art is mentioned and he has justly received his many honors, such as a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship and the French government's *Palme d'Académiques*.

His work as an educator has prevented him from painting extensively since 1959. (Snodgrass, '68).

In the late 1920's, Dr. O. B. Jacobson, friend and benefactor to many aspiring artists, had been asked to work with a group of Kiowa painters from southwestern Oklahoma. These five men and one woman had shown an innate ability to draw and paint native subjects. Because the six could not meet entrance requirements of the University of Oklahoma, they worked under the guidance of Dr. Jacobson and his assistant, Edith Mahier, in a makeshift studio converted from the latter's office — always avoiding the intrusion of European art theories. Miss Mahier and Dr. Jacobson encouraged this now famous group of artists, Monroe Tsatoke, James Auchiah, Steve Mopope, Spencer Asah, Jack Hokeah, and Lois Smokey. Jacobson and Mahier had joined the increasing list of those who undertook the task of tirelessly supporting the Indian artists and acquainting the public with a refreshing and natural art expression. Gilcrease Institute owns fifty-eight paintings by these six Kiowas — paintings which Dr. Jacobson collected during the height of their careers.

Among the eighteen paintings by Hokeah in the Gilcrease Collections, there is the *Grass Dancer* (paint combined with color pencil), which is inscribed "painted June 15, 1922, Jack Hokeah's first real painting." An interesting parallel to this is his *Buffalo Dancer* which was painted in 1936 — long after his studies at the University. Hokeah knew and understood what he painted because he was a remarkable dancer. His performances brought many sales of his individualized paintings, for the buyers associated them with the artist's own dancing. Hokeah went to New Mexico with a dance troupe in 1930, and while he was in Santa Fe, he met the well-known potter, Maria Martinez. As a result of this meeting, he stayed with her for ten years as an adopted son (Ellison, '72). It is quite reasonable to assume his painting style would be influenced somewhat by such a lengthy contact with the San Ildefonso-Southwest Movement, and it is reflected in his work.

Too frequently a benefactor's efforts to help the Indian artists were met with opposition from the public as well as from the Federal Government. At that point in time, development of native arts was not the policy of the Government's Indian Affairs office. The breakthrough came in 1932 when their policy was changed, and the arts were encouraged. In September of that year the Bureau of Indian Affairs reorganized the Santa Fe Indian School as the arts and crafts school



Pop Chalee, Forest Scene

for the entire Indian service. Miss Dorothy Dunn became head of the painting department and resolutely undertook "to study Indian painting as an art and, as an artist and research person, to assist in its creative development by Indian students through exploration with them of their own heritage of art forms and symbols" (Dunn, No. 1). Examples of pre-modern Indian art, such as ceramic designs, basketry, pictographs, sandpaintings, and hidepaintings, were studied and served as important inspirations for the students. They were never allowed to copy. They were encouraged to make use of available research material as were all serious artists and the result was highly innovative paintings in oil, tempera, and native earth colors.

Fortunately for us, Thomas Gilcrease saw the historical and esthetic importance of collecting paintings by students who had been in "the School" at Santa Fe.

They include such outstanding artists as Andy Tsihnajinnie (Navajo), Allan Houser (Chiricahua Apache), Merina Luján, better known as Pop Chalee (Taos), Quincy Tahoma (Navajo), and Gerald Nailor (Navajo). Tsihnajinnie, born in 1918 in Arizona, first learned about pencils when he was five and he asked his mother to buy one for him when she went to the trading post for supplies. With the pencil, he drew on wrapping paper and the backs of labels from cans. Until that time, the youngster had used "stone-on-stone" to produce charming drawings. At "the School" he quickly



Andy Tsihnaahjinnie, *Ye' ibechai*

was acclaimed for his imaginative and creative paintings. During his career he has been known for various "color periods"—pink, blue—and even a vibrant terra cotta, as seen in his *Ye'ibichai* painting. Despite his many moods, the spontaneity of his brushwork, the excitement generated by his colors and action, along with his ability to draw place him among the elite in Indian art circles.

Gerald Nailor, born in 1917, in New Mexico, had his promising career cut short by an untimely death in 1952. The color range in his palette, at first glance, appears to be limited but on close examination we find this to be untrue. Of the Navajo painters, Nailor was possibly the most sophisticated with his accomplished stylistic sense of design and color. In his resourcefulness he often incorporated facsimilies of sandpainting designs and illustrated important facets of ceremonial life as is shown in *Learning to Take Pollen From Corn*.

Quincy Tahoma, born in 1921 in Arizona, also had a short career. He died in 1956. Often called the most dynamic of Southwest Indian painters, Tahoma's work passed through several phases, but the one for which he is most remembered always included a stout framed, high spirited horse—usually blue and white—with the long stylized mane and tail. There is a flowing rhythm in his paintings as all the action he portrays weaves a unified composition. Tahoma established himself as a full-time artist in Santa Fe soon after World War II. It was there that he shared his studio with Nailor and other artists who also became well known. Whether it was through the sharing of ideas, or through further schooling, Tahoma's knowledge of anatomy and foreshortening brought him acclaim from academically trained artists, his peers, and the art collecting public.

Pop Chalee, born in Utah in 1908, the daughter of a Taos man and East Indian woman is probably the best known female painter to come out of "the School." Absolutely no other artist in this group has successfully copied or adapted her well-balanced "forest" paintings. Typical of this style is *Forest Scene*. It is delicate, and decorative and the small birds, animals, flowers, and butterflies all seem to mesh with the rhythmic quality she was able to achieve.

Allan Houser, the last from "the School" to be reviewed here, was born in 1915 in Oklahoma and is the great-nephew of Geronimo. Houser's parents had been taken to Fort Sill and held prisoners with

Gerald Nailor, Learning to Take Pollen from Corn



Geronimo's band. Later, after his father started to farm, the boy helped at home and attended school intermittently. From a beginning of many hardships, he attained an outstanding career and reputation in the art field. He first began painting in 1924 and is today equally well known as a sculptor. Included in his accomplishments of recognition are the Guggenheim Scholarship for Painting and Sculpture in 1948, and *Palmes d'Académiques* from the French government in 1954. Since 1962, he has served as an instructor at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. The Institute replaced the old Santa Fe Indian School where Houser had been an art student for four years. Houser is a fine draftsman who effectively controls his paint and drawing to acquire motion and textures with the least amount of congestion. His subject matter seldom ventures from the varied aspects of the early Chiricahua Apache life-style. His Apache faces, often, with an open mouth, as in *Love Songs*, are unmistakably Houser.

James Russell Humetewa, Jr. (Hopi), born in 1926, in Arizona, graduated from the Santa Fe Indian School in 1945 long after its famous art department received international acclaim. Although he studied under Kabotie and the teacher's influence is visible, Humetewa utilized a more limited palette and almost never accepted the challenge of a multi-figure painting. He incorporated a technique of shading not unlike Kabotie's—one which produced a slight three-dimensional quality yet not like the shading used in traditional European art. His *Hopi Mask Dancer* has a charming primitive quality. Although the anatomy of the Kachina is ill-proportioned, it is exceptionally fine for use in ethnographic studies of the many Pueblo gods—just as White-Bear's work had been used earlier.

Perhaps too frequently Indian paintings are valued and/or enjoyed, only as rich "source material" in the study of Indians. Yet it is difficult to ignore what can be gleaned, for instance, from the forty-two Peyote-related paintings among the more than 600 paintings (by Indians), in the Gilcrease Collections. In the late nineteenth century, the Peyote "religion" was introduced to Oklahoma Plains Indians. The highly stylized symbolism relating to the iconography of this group—The Native American Church—is found time and time again in work by artists from this area. In *Peyote Ceremony*, the aquatic spirit bird which is a major symbol in Peyote religion, is shown in flight position with wings outstretched. The Peyote ceremony

is mainly prayer and meditation, and in the ceremony, the spirit bird serves the participants as a messenger. Archie Blackowl's Peyote painting leaves no doubt about the appearance of the objects used in the ceremony. He has faithfully drawn and expertly painted in detail the beadwork on the staff, the rattle, and the fan. The kettledrum, the altar, and the Peyote pod itself are unmistakably accurate.

Archie Blackowl (Cheyenne), was born in Oklahoma in 1911 and, until recent years, was among the most prolific painters of the region. He first became aware of art at the age of six when he saw old Red Tooth painting a skin tipi. By the early 1930's, he had become a serious painter. His work is sharp in color and his symmetrical designs hold up very well. As a result of his studies under the muralist, Olaf Nordmark, his murals are excellent, and fortunately he has completed several. Problems with his eyes have prevented him from painting as much as he once did.

The work of Blackbear Bosin (Kiowa-Comanche), is internationally known. Born in 1921, in Oklahoma, Bosin was the eldest of four children. At seventeen he helped maintain the family farm—painting only in spare moments. Although unable to accept two university art scholarships because of family obligations, he achieved success with little formal training and became the only American Indian artist to be represented in the 1965 White House Festival of the Arts. It was not until after he served in the Marines in World War II that he moved to Wichita, Kansas, and seriously began a career in art. His early paintings are simple yet well done. Through experimentation and wider exposure, Bosin began to develop a quality to his work that is not found often. His *Winter Hunt* was painted early in the beginning of his exploring and shows his talent for drawing and handling paint. By the 1960's, his work had become so individualistic and so powerful that younger artists were making feeble attempts at copying him. It is not surprising that they failed but it's encouraging to know that each generation brings a master painter for the young artists to look up to.

The contemporary Indian painter draws upon his culture as a source for creativity. His ancestors left their art etched on rock, painted on Kiva walls, detailed on animal skins and in sands—they have made themselves known—a rich and proud art heritage that hopefully future generations will add to and contribute to.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Cohoe, A. *Cheyenne Sketchbook*. Ed. by Karen Petersen. University of Oklahoma Press (Norman, 1964). Dunn, Dorothy. "The Development of Modern American Indian Painting in the Southwest and Plains Areas." *El Palacio*. Vol. 58, No. 11 (Santa Fe, 1951). *American Indian Painting of the Southwest and Plains Areas*. University of New Mexico Press (1968). "Studio of Painting, Santa Fe Indian School." *El Palacio*. LXVII, No. 1. Ellison, Rosemary. *Contemporary Southwestern Indian Painting*. United States Dept. of the Interior (Washington, D. C., 1972). Maximilian, Prince of Wied. "Travels in the Interior of North America, 1832-1834" Vols. 22, 23 and 24 of *Early Western Travels, 1748-1846*. Ed. by R. G. Thwaites. A. H. Clark Co. (Cleveland, 1906). Snodgrass, Jeanne O. *American Indian Painters*. Museum of the American Indian. (New York, 1968). Tanner, Clara Lee, and Forbes, Anne. "Indian Arts Fund Collection of Paintings." *El Palacio*. Vol. 55, No. 12 (Santa Fe, 1948). Tanner, Clara Lee. "Contemporary Indian Arts." *Arizona Highways*. XXVI, No. 2 (February, 1950). Villagrà, Gaspar Pérez de. *History of New Mexico*. Ed. by F. W. Hodge and trans. by Gilberto Espinosa. Quivira Society. (Los Angeles, 1933). Wyman, Leland C. Correspondence with J. Snodgrass, 1967.

