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This is the first of two articles comparing Frederic Remington with French nineteenth century art. This summer's issue of Gilcrease Magazine will feature an article by Joan Carpenter comparing Remington with French military art.

Was Frederic Remington an Impressionist?

BY JOAN CARPENTER

WAS FREDERIC REMINGTON an Impressionist? Those who have written about the artist often call him one, especially when they discuss his late paintings. In doing so, they are fulfilling Remington's own most heartfelt desire. He wanted nothing more than to be included by critics in the circle of the American Impressionist painters. Yet, in his definitive book on the subject, William Gerds, today's foremost authority on American Impressionism, does not even mention Remington, in spite of the fact that he was friendly with such leaders of the movement as Childe Hassam and Julian Alden Weir. Just where Remington fits in terms of French and American Impressionism — and of American

Joan Carpenter Troccoli, for several years a resident of Oklahoma City, earned a Ph.D. degree in art history from New York University. Residence in Oklahoma has awakened in her an interest in the art of the American West. She is currently under contract at the University of Oklahoma Press to produce a book on historic masters of western art using the Gilcrease collection as source material.



Frederic Remington, "An Episode of the Buffalo Hunt," 1908, 30¼ inches by 27¼ inches, oil on canvas

painting around 1900 in general — has never been fully described.

Frederic Remington's artistic career breaks down into three parts which correspond roughly to the decades of the 1880s, 1890s, and from 1900 until his death in 1909. The 1880s were the years of Remington's artistic apprenticeship, such as it was, and of his rise as an illustrator. After a year and a half of formal artistic training at Yale University, during which his creative efforts bore greater fruit on the football field than in the studio, Remington dropped out of college. Late in the summer of 1881, he made his first trip west, to Montana. Upon receiving \$10,000 from his father's estate, Remington bought a sheep ranch near Peabody, Kansas. During the next two years, Remington ran his ranch in haphazard fashion and toured the Southwest and Mexico. He capped his western career with a brief stint as the silent partner in a Kansas City saloon. By 1885, Remington was married to a fellow New Yorker and had established a home in Brooklyn. Thereafter, he only visited the West on short "professional tours."

Remington had been an inveterate sketcher of horses, soldiers, and scenes from his favorite stories since boyhood. In the early 1880s he began to apply his inborn talent to the personalities and situations peculiar to the Western frontier and, in very short order, became an accomplished and popular illustrator. Most of Remington's work was published in illustrated magazines such as *Harper's Weekly* and *Outing*.

His highly-paid and highly-praised work as an illustrator did not satisfy the ambitions of Frederic Remington. In the 1890s he began to covet recognition as a fine artist, a painter. As early as 1887, Remington had exhibited his paintings at the prestigious National Academy of Design, and he was made an Associate of the Academy in 1891. The next step up the ladder of America's most distinguished association of professional artists was acceptance as a full-fledged Academician, an honor which Remington felt was deservedly his. But he never received it, although he diligently applied himself to his painting in the 1890s.

The public was no more appreciative of his efforts than the National Academy. At auctions of Remington's work held in 1893 and 1895, his illustrations were knocked down for more than his paintings. Remington was forced to

acknowledge that illustration, not painting, would be his principal livelihood until he made some breakthrough. In 1895, he did, however, find a satisfying new creative outlet — and one that would sell — when he began making clay models of his western subjects to be cast in bronze.

Remington turned to his painting with renewed determination at the turn of the century. His objectives shifted from the depiction of action-packed scenes of Western military and cowboy life (where a formidable challenger to his leading position in the field had arisen in Charles Schreyvogel) to the study of color and of effects of light. He believed that his years of painting pictures for reproduction in grisaille (*The Escort*) and his work from black and white pencil drawings and photographs had eroded his color sense. He also thought that the kind of anecdotal subjects that made up his illustrating assignments were too trivial to be worthy of the attention of a fine artist. To overcome these handicaps, Remington began to paint colorful landscape studies in oil. He still needed his income as an illustrator, but he was able to work out a contract with *Collier's* magazine that allowed him greater artistic freedom. It stipulated that his work would be reproduced in color and that he would choose his own subjects.

Frederic Remington craved critical and public recognition of his achievements as much as he wanted to make beautiful paintings. Years of fame as an illustrator and as a rough and ready American celebrity would have made a retreat into isolation in order to pursue a personal artistic vision unthinkable to him. It is not accidental that Remington's painting recipe combined variations on the themes of his highly successful illustrations with an artistic style that was widely accepted in the United States in the late 1890s and early 1900s.

Many writers focus on the struggles, even to the point of starvation, of the French Impressionists in the 1860s and 1870s. We tend to forget how popular the style had become by the end of the century, especially in the United States. By the 1890s, virtually all of the most successful American painters had been affected by Impressionism in one way or another. In the early 1900s, Impressionism was no longer radical. On the contrary, it was the style of conservative artists, painters like William Merritt Chase and John Singer Sargent, who represented both the artistic and the social

establishment.

Remington aspired to the Impressionist style for several reasons. First of all, the loose brushwork of the Impressionists and their emphasis on the reproduction of effects of light above the representation of anecdote seemed opposed to the keen graphic edge, monochromatic palette, and story-telling subject matter of illustration. There would be no mistaking Remington's "Impressionist" paintings for the work of an illustrator, as there might have been if, for example, he had chosen to adopt a style like that of the Ashcan School, a group of early twentieth-century American artists with backgrounds in newspaper illustration who maintained a journalistic realism in their paintings. But the Ashcan School artists were considered rebels, and Remington, although only slightly older than they were, was keen on obtaining a conventional success.

In turning away from illustration and toward American Impressionism, Remington was affiliating himself with an

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older generation whose professional respect he wanted badly. The artists he most admired, Childe Hassam, Julian Alden Weir, and John Twachtman, had reached their maturity and gained critical and popular acceptance in the late 1880s and early 1890s, just when Remington began to concentrate on his painting. Weir, in fact, had been his teacher when Remington attended classes at the Art Students League for a few months in 1886. In 1909, Remington sold his house in New Rochelle and his beloved country place in upstate New York in order to move to Connecticut, where many of the American Impressionists kept summer homes. He became especially close to his new neighbor Childe Hassam.

This series of conscious, sometimes seemingly calcu-

lated moves on Remington's part culminated in exhibitions of his work held at the New York gallery of M. Knoedler and Company in 1908 and 1909. After long years of frustration, Remington could at last write to a friend after the December 1908 exhibition, "My show made a great hit this winter . . . I am no longer an illustrator." The 1909 reviews were even better. Remington confided to his diary that "I have received splendid notices from all the papers. They ungrudgingly give me a high place as a 'mere painter.' I have been on their trail a long while and they never surrendered while they had a leg to stand on. The 'illustrator' phase has become a background."

One aspect of the paintings Remington exhibited at Knoedler's that may have increased their appeal to the critics was their subject matter. Although Remington had had to struggle to eliminate "illustrational" story-telling themes from his paintings, what did remain, a nostalgic distillation of the waning days of the western frontier, was uniquely American. Since about 1900, American critics had been seeking native traits in the work of the American Impressionists. Merely adopting a style invented abroad was not enough; our artists had to put an American stamp on it. In this respect, Remington succeeded better than any of the American Impressionists he admired — none of them made images so closely tied to a particular time and place in American history and consciousness. The critics found in Remington's late work what they had been looking for, a fine art with a distinctly national character. The art writer for the New York *Globe* noted that in his 1908 exhibition "Frederic Remington sounds a purely American note." Remington died shortly after the opening of his 1909 show. His new-found status as a painter — an *American* painter — was celebrated in an obituary that appeared on December 27 in the New York *Mail and Express*:

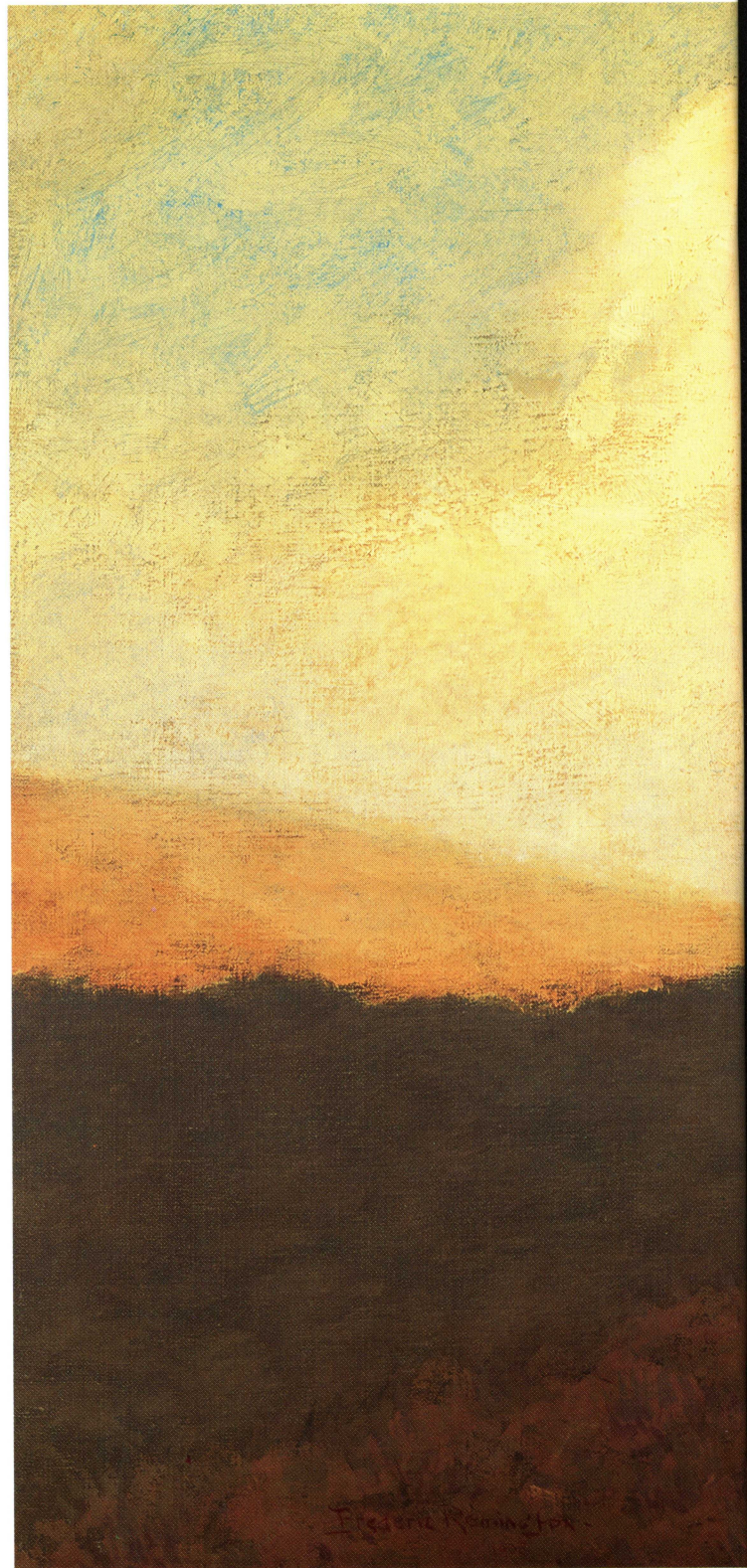
If we take him as a whole, we find him to have been surely one of the foremost of real American artists, if not their chief — a man whose work we may present as proof that out of the very heart of homely American life may spring painters who need no European training, nor the imitation of classic models, but only technical skill and an intense love of their own country's beauty, to make them great.

We can imagine that, although his death at 48 was tragically premature, Remington died a fulfilled man. His late

paintings are his best, and in quality they compare favorably with the work of the American Impressionists. But the question remains. Was Frederic Remington an Impressionist?

Before tackling that problem, we ought to know just what is meant by the word "Impressionist" and how familiar Remington was with Impressionism. The premier Impressionist was Claude Monet (1840-1926). He is given most of the credit for the development of the style. In an article by Giles Edgerton published in *The Craftsman* nine months before the artist's death, Remington stated that Monet was among the painters whose work he had found inspirational. The paintings of Monet and several other French Impressionists had first been shown to an American audience in Boston in 1883, while Remington was occupied with his adventures and misadventures as a 22-year-old sheep rancher. The next opportunity for Americans to see French Impressionist paintings, including 48 by Monet, was an exhibition held in New York in the spring of 1886. Remington was then enrolled in classes at the Art Students League, and it is hard to imagine that any of the students or instructors there would have missed so important an event. In 1892, Remington visited Paris. An exhibition of Monet's work had taken place in Paris in February and March of that year, but Remington arrived in June, too late to see it, although he may have been able to see some paintings by Monet during his stay in the French capital. The World's Columbian Exposition, which Remington visited while on a trip to Chicago in 1893, featured an exhibition of paintings by Monet and other French Impressionists lent by prominent American collectors. In all probability, Remington had additional opportunities to see Monet's pictures, in the original or in reproduction. Of all the Impressionists, Monet was by far the best-known in this country. He was frequently the subject of articles in newspapers and art magazines, and his status as the founder of Impressionism attracted flocks of young American painters to his home in Giverny.

If Remington had a chance to examine Monet's paintings of the mid-1870s, he would have been able to study French Impressionism in its most perfect and complete expression. *The Bridge at Argenteuil* (1874; Louvre), for example, is a textbook demonstration of the Impressionist principles. Here Monet presents a segment of nature that appears to have been randomly chosen — nothing significant is happening in this glimpse of the river, its bank, a bridge, and the





Frederic Remington, "With the Eye of the Mind", 1908, 27 inches by 40 inches, oil on canvas

sky. The serene, balanced composition has no dramatic focal point. It is a "slice of life" that seems to have been arbitrarily cut from the continuously unfolding panorama of the natural landscape. The canvas is evenly covered with small strokes of pure color, each of which is meant to be an equivalent of a ray of sunlight reflecting from a colored surface to the human eye. Monet created scintillating effects of light, especially in the reflections in the water, by laying down brightly contrasting colors — reds and yellows against greens and blues — side by side. Monet was intent on recreating in paint the exact effects of light and atmosphere at a particular moment in a particular place. He wanted his pictures to give an impression of spontaneity, as if he had painted them quickly, before the sun could descend in the sky or disappear behind a cloud. He took his canvas and paints out into the landscape, looked hard at the scene before him, and translated it into a painting composed of flecks of opaque paint.

How close did Remington come to Monet's classic Impressionist work? Let us consider his subject matter first. Monet was a landscape painter. If figures are present in his pictures, they are just another part of the landscape, literally blended into nature by Impressionist technique, which breaks everything in the pictorial field down into small strokes of color. Remington, throughout his career, was a figure painter. His prairie landscape, which varies little from

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picture to picture, is merely a backdrop for the dramatic activities of his figures, who literally take center stage in his work. Remington realized that the exciting story-telling of his illustrations and early paintings was at odds with Impressionism, in which the principal drama is always the play of light and color. In his late work, Remington drained out some of the action in order to transform his figures from energetic actors to contemplative symbols of a vanished West. But these quieter figure groups still carry far more meaning than Monet's figures do, and they still occupy the

front and center of Remington's compositions.

In terms of technique, Remington moved from a sharp-to a soft-focus style. In his late work he is less dependent on a hard-edged graphic line, and he glosses over the documentary details which were an important part of his early claims to fame as a faithful illustrator of western life. In his late work, Remington does use the flecked brushwork of Monet, but only in places, not evenly over the entire surface of the canvas. For example, Remington employs strokes of contrasting blue and red to heighten the effect of blazing southwestern sunlight in *With the Eye of the Mind*, but these "broken colors" are applied only to the foreground figures. The little flecks of color which represent sensations of light are the constructive principle of French Impressionist painting. Monet's pictures are built up of small patches of color. Remington's compositions, on the other hand, are based on large interlocking colored shapes. Where Impressionist color patches are present in his work, they are applied as an almost decorative overlay on these silhouettes.

In one very important respect, Remington can never be considered a true colleague of the Impressionist Monet. It was an article of faith with the French painter that all pictures must be executed from start to finish outdoors, in sunlight, in the presence of the subject. Remington made landscape sketches in oil in the West and in the Adirondacks, but his largest and most important pictures were all painted in his studio. Like Monet, Remington stressed first-hand observation of natural light, and he tortuously applied himself to its recreation on canvas. But Monet would have been incapable of Remington's statement, made in 1908, that he had "painted in studio & I have *now* discovered for the first time how to do the *silver sheen* of moonlight." No matter how difficult the challenge, Monet would have insisted that the Impressionist paint moonlight by moonlight, not from memory under the gaslight of the studio.

Remington's outdoor oil sketches represent his closest approach to the painting practice and technique of Monet, principally because he made them fairly rapidly and worked outdoors in direct confrontation with his subject. In his sketch of the Saint Lawrence River of about 1907, now in the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming, Remington abandons his usual centralized compositional focus for a more spontaneously glimpsed and casually arranged view of nature. As in Monet's *Bridge at Argenteuil*, figures are absent and buildings are pushed to the periphery of the



Frederic Remington, "The Wicked Pony", 1898, 18 inches by 9 inches, bronze



Frederic Remington, "Camp on Cheyenne River", n.d., 12½ inches by 16⅝ inches, oil on canvas

"Impressionists are, above all, colorists. They cannot sacrifice color for multiple lines."

image. We are presented not with a dramatic event or even a suggestion of human interest but with a broad and placid expanse of sunlit landscape.

But *Saint Lawrence River* and Remington's other oil sketches are just that — sketches. Many are painted on board, not on canvas, and most of them are fairly small. (*Saint Lawrence River* measures just 12 by 16 inches.) Although Remington exhibited some of his oil sketches, they do not have the look of a final statement that a French Impressionist painting possesses. Both in composition and execution, they have the appearance of experiments rather than finished works of art.

The small study *Camp on Cheyenne River* has a frankly sketchy, rather than truly Impressionist, look. Remington used a fairly dry brush to lay one thin layer of paint over another. Monet's pictures, by contrast, are thickly painted, and his areas of color are opaque patches of pigment. *Camp on Cheyenne River* is painted in delicate hues of green, pale blue, peach, and rose. Like many Americans, Remington conceived of the Impressionist palette as a collection of pastels, although Monet's choice of colors often tended more toward the primaries of bright red, yellow, and blue.

Based on this analysis, Remington does not appear to be a promising candidate for election to a group of artists headed by Claude Monet. But there is more to Remington — as there is more to Impressionism and the history of its impact in this country. The turning point in that history is usually dated to 1893, the year of the great Chicago World's Fair marking the four-hundredth anniversary of Columbus' landfall in the Americas. Impressionism was present at the Fair not only in the loan exhibition of modern French masterpieces already mentioned, but in almost every painting shown, or so it seemed to contemporary commentators. The most perceptive of these was the novelist Hamlin Garland, whose review of the paintings shown at the Chicago exposition appeared in his book *Crumbling Idols* in 1894.

In his discussion, Garland noted that "impressionism as a principle has affected the younger men of Russia, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and America, as well as the *plein air* school of Giverny (sic)" and that "to the younger men it assumes almost as much importance as the law of gravity." This group of "younger men" included many of Remington's future Connecticut neighbors. Garland went on:

The impressionist is a buoyant and cheerful painter. He loves the open air, and the mid-day sun. He has little to say

about the 'mystery' and 'sentiment' of nature. His landscapes quiver with virile color . . . At his worst, the impressionist is daring in his choice of subjects and over-assertive in his handling. Naturally, in his reaction he has swung back across the line too far.

This leads Monet to paint the same haystack in twenty different lights, in order to emphasize the value of color and atmosphere over mere subject . . . It led Bunker to paint the radiant meadows of June, and leads Remington to paint the hot hollows between hills of yellow sand, over which a cobalt, cloudless sky arches.

As one who eagerly scanned the newspapers for comments about his exhibitions, Remington is certain to have read Garland's words. Even though the critic sounded a cautionary note about the artist's style, he placed Remington in the most distinguished company imaginable at a time when almost everyone else dismissed his paintings as lowly illustration. In all probability, Remington read the rest of Garland's piece, which may well have influenced his own conception of his painting as he searched for an Impressionist style. For example, Garland describes Impressionist composition not in the conventionally accepted way as an all-over, even accumulation of tiny colored accents, but rather in terms that seem directly applicable to the work of Remington.

(The Impressionists) select some moment, some center of interest . . . This central object they work out with great care, but all else fades away into subordinate blur of color, precisely as in life. We look at a sheep, for example, feeding under a tree. We see the sheep with great clearness, and the tree and the stump, but the fence and hill outside the primary circle of vision are only obscurely perceived. The meadow beyond is a mere blur of yellow-green . . .

This sort of composition was always characteristic of Remington's work, but in his later paintings, such as *The Stampede*, he would develop it further.

Garland recognized the importance of color to the Impressionist style.

This idea of impressionism makes much of the relation and interplay of light and shade, — not in black and white, but in color. Impressionists are, above all, colorists. They cannot sacrifice color for multiple lines.

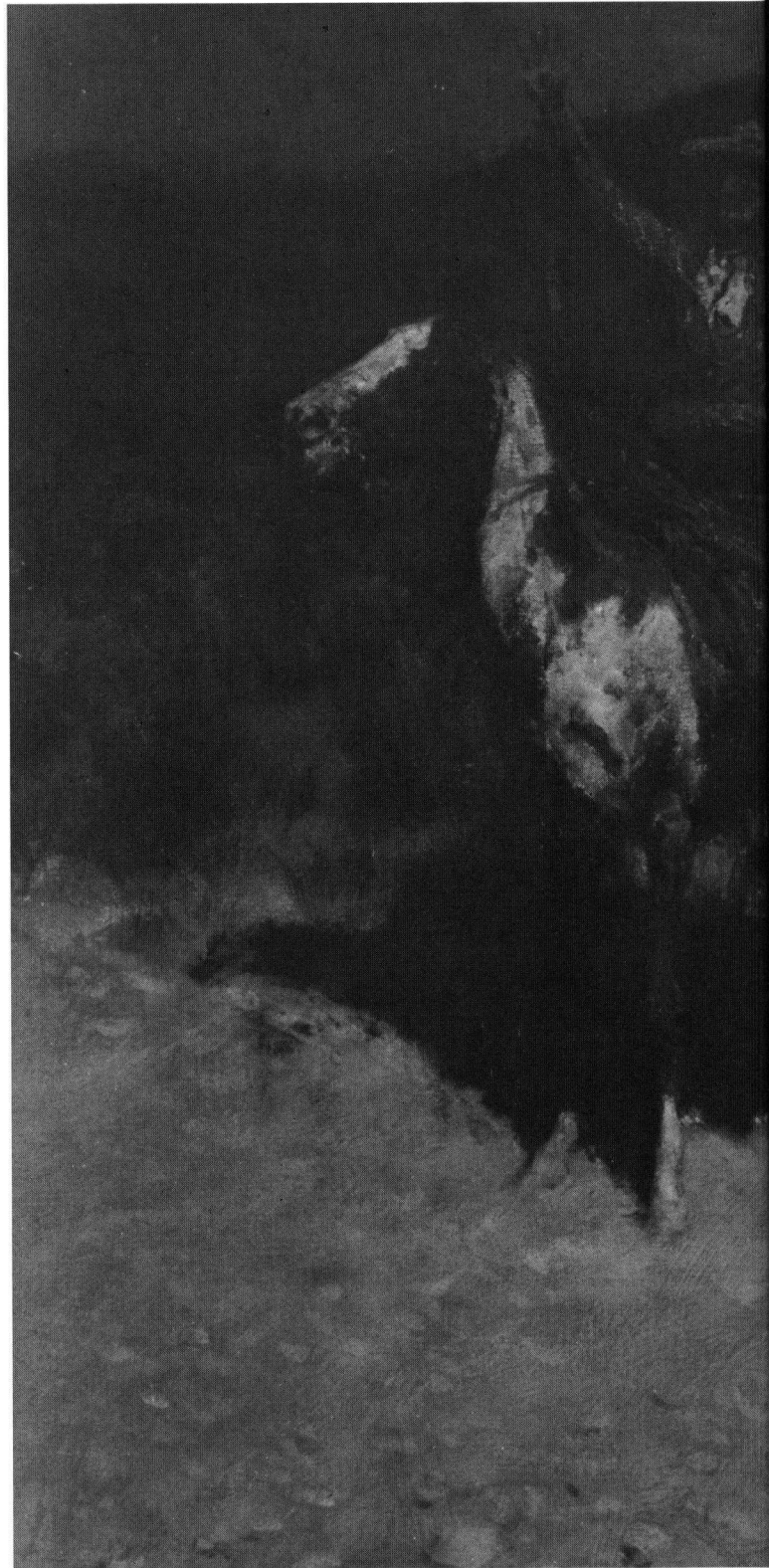
We can imagine Remington, at that moment just beginning his difficult struggles with color, resolving, upon reading Garland's works, not to give up the fight.

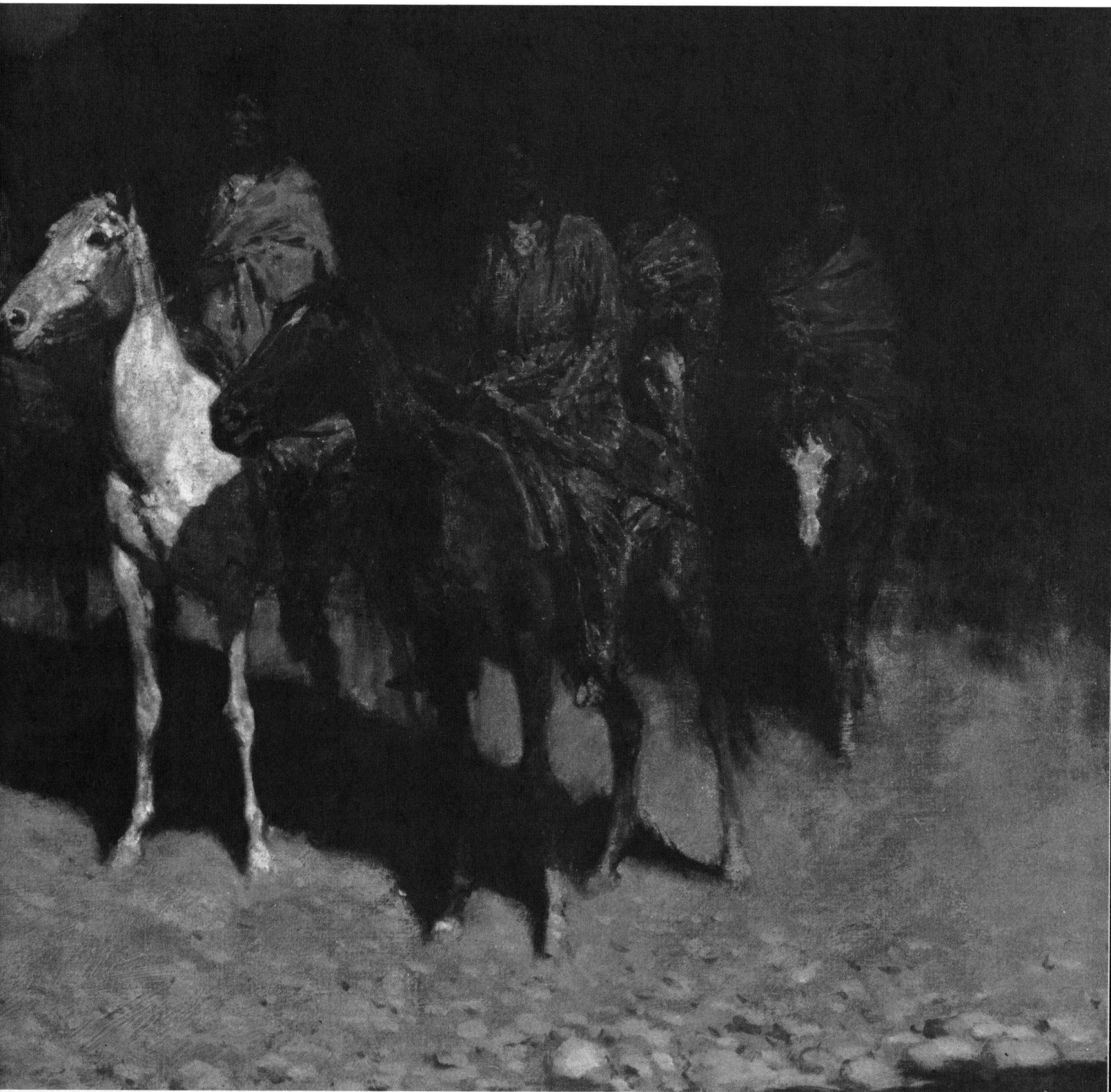
The key to Garland's appreciation of Remington lies in the

same qualities in his work that would elicit approval from the reviewers of his exhibitions of 1908 and 1909. Garland stressed that "each painter should paint his own surroundings, with nature for his teacher." He pointed out that "the atmosphere and coloring of Russia is (sic) not the atmosphere of Holland." Remington's "hot hollows between hills of yellow sand, over which a cobalt, cloudless sky arches," could never be mistaken for the humid atmosphere of the Netherlands. For Garland, the blinding sunlight of Remington's paintings, so specifically southwestern in its intensity, was alone enough to qualify him as an Impressionist. Garland's emphasis on local light and atmosphere was part of a larger program. He moved from there to his next point, which was his "settled conviction that art, to be vital, must be local in its subject; its universal appeal must be in its working out, — in the way it is done. Dependence upon the English or French groups is alike fatal to fresh, individual art. The impressionist is not only a local painter, in choice of subject he deals with the present . . . He does not feel that America is without subjects to paint because she has no castles and donjon keeps . . ."

By Garland's standards, Remington was an Impressionist in 1893, if only because, like many young painters of the time, he introduced bright colors and effects of sunlight into his pictures and chose distinctly American subjects. As the critic recognized, in these early paintings, which are never described as examples of Remington's "Impressionism," the artist came closer to the spirit of Impressionism than he realized.

In the nineteenth century cavalcade of artistic styles, Impressionism succeeds Realism. The Realists, who became prominent in the 1850s, were the first artists to devote themselves to the depiction of contemporary life in an honest, straightforward way. Their program was completely in accord with that of Remington in the late 1880s and early 1890s. Remington was committed to the creation of images based on contemporary fact. Although imagination played a role in his painting, as it does in the work of every artist, the origins of his pictures always lay in things which Remington had to some extent experienced himself. The authenticity of his work resides in this direct experience, recreated on canvas as only he could do it. He refused an assignment to illustrate episodes of the Civil War with the statement, "The fact is that I do not do the Civil War period because I do not know enough about it," and told the teen-aged Maynard Dixon to be "always true to yourself —





Frederic Remington, "Moonlight Scouting Party", n.d., 27 inches by 40 inches, oil on canvas

if you imitate any other man ever so little you are 'gone.'"

Impressionism is an extension of Realism. It too is a style of contemporary life, directly and truthfully recorded. But the Impressionists take the premises of Realism several steps further in their almost obsessive insistence on quickly setting down a specific passing effect of light and atmosphere and their development of an equivalent to individual sensations of reflected light in flecks of colored paint.

Among the Impressionists there was, however, an artist who never adopted the broken color technique of Monet and always maintained the Realists' interest in the telling details and action of life around him. His name was Edgar Degas, and, strangely enough, it is a comparison with Degas that brings out the elements of Remington's art which are closest to French Impressionist painting.

Remington could have seen 23 pictures by Degas in the same 1886 exhibition which included a generous sampling of work by Monet. His teacher Julian Alden Weir had become familiar with the work of Degas while studying in Paris, and he probably shared his admiration for the artist with his students. However, the direct influence of Degas on Remington is highly unlikely and not the point here. It is the coincidental affinity between the two artists' choice of subjects and their means of expression that is worthy of note.

Of all the French Impressionists, Degas was the most committed to the representation of the human figure. He hardly painted a landscape during his long career, and, significantly, not one of his major works was executed outside his studio. Degas' subjects were the inhabitants of late nineteenth-century Paris, whom he tirelessly observed and sketched. He especially delighted in delineating the characteristic dress, accessories, and gestures of urban workers ranging from jockeys to milliners to ballerinas and orchestra musicians.

Degas was one of the two or three greatest draftsmen of the nineteenth century. Unlike Monet, who broke every form down into molecular dabs of paint, Degas always maintained formal integrity through masterful drawing. Late in his career, Degas created some very beautiful, high-keyed color effects, especially in his pastels, but draftsmanship always took precedence over every other element of his work.

Remington, too, was a draftsman first, a colorist second. And he too was an artist of modern life, although his subjects were the denizens of the American West. But, like Paris, the West had a glamour all its own. Both Degas and

Remington show us contemporary life at its most intensely experienced; they simply show it in different arenas.

Just as Degas did, Remington created, in his illustrations and early paintings, a sharply observed catalogue of figures carrying out their "professional" activities — except in Remington's case the occupations represented are those of the Plains cavalry, Indians, prospectors, and cowboys, rather than Parisian dancers, cabaret singers, and violinists.

Horses play a highly significant role in the art of both Remington and Degas. Both could have been laid to rest beneath Remington's chosen epitaph "He knew the horse." They were concerned above all with an accurate rendition of equine anatomy in motion, and there is little question that, to that end, both consulted the photographs of Eadweard Muybridge as well as their own experience.

Both Remington and Degas modeled their favorite subjects in clay, and both looked upon modeling as a kind of creative exploration. They each introduced new possibilities for sculpture, Degas in his uncompromising realism and creation of sculptural "sketches," and Remington in the use of daring poses and his placement of the figure in a newly tenuous relationship to its base, thus going against the grain of the whole history of a traditionally static and stable art.

The major difference between Remington and Degas lies in the distinction between what we might call Remington's American straightforwardness and Degas' Gallic irony. For example, Remington, a self-styled "man's man," had ambivalent feelings about women. He solved that problem in his art by depicting them only very rarely. Degas is frequently accused of misogyny. But rather than simply excluding women from his art, he "assaulted" them in his pictures, by making descending theater curtains cut off the heads of ballerinas, for instance, or by invading women's privacy with his keyhole views of their bedrooms and boudoirs.

Degas' more sophisticated and subtle way of expressing his attitude toward a particular subject extends to his compositions in general. He views people and interior settings obliquely, from unorthodox points of view that highlight aspects of daily life which we don't ordinarily pause to consider and reveal things about people and their relationships with others which they may not wish us to know. Remington puts his figures in precarious positions (*The Buffalo Horse*), but he always views them straight on, never



Frederic Remington, "The Hungry Moon", 1906, 20 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches by 26 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches, oil on canvas

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from an unexpected viewpoint. We might say that Degas places his figures in psychological danger, whereas Remington's compositions are filled with physical risk.

However, Remington's pictures can be described by many of the same terms we apply to the compositions of Degas. Both artists made significant use of photography in their preparatory work, and critics have discovered "photographic" qualities in the compositions of both men. Remington grasped the momentary excitement of a split-second of dramatic action. Degas, too, conveyed the intensity of the here and now with an almost photographic stop-action technique. The desire of both artists to reproduce the absolute truth of a certain style of modern life resulted in dynamic, daring pictorial and sculptural compositions.

Remington's figures, although they are described down to the last detail of costume and gear, have strangely im-

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sive faces, as do those of Degas. As Brian Dippie has observed, Remington delineates representative types, not individuals; Degas' figures, too, are not presented as fully thinking and feeling human beings. This disengagement from humanity is compounded by an unsentimental indifference to the cruelty of fate that can occasionally be found in the work of both artists. Degas' large oil painting of 1866, *Steeplechase: The Fallen Jockey*, depicts a gravely injured rider in a quite matter-of-fact way, just as Remington's 1898 bronze, *Wicked Pony*, rather coldbloodedly shows a cowboy being killed by his horse.

The irony in this comparison is that the graphic art which Remington rejected was just the sort of thing which would have appealed to Degas as well as to Monet and the rest of the French Impressionists. The Realists and Impressionists wanted to celebrate what they called the "heroism" of modern life by presenting individuals of their own time whose exploits paralleled the romantic escapades associ-

ated with figures from the past. They often found their subjects in the French equivalents of the illustrations which Remington published in *Harper's Weekly*. Previously, the subject matter and style of popular illustrations had not been looked upon as fit material for incorporation into serious art, but their topicality made them ideally suited to Realist and Impressionist objectives. It was this element of contemporary reporting which Remington labored hard to eliminate from his art in his quest to be a painter. But it is precisely his extraordinary ability as an illustrator that makes him most like an Impressionist.

The French Impressionists would have loved Remington's illustrations, especially his stylish pictures of cavalry officers. Remington's soldiers have all the allure of Parisian dandies dressed in the latest fashion. To a certain extent, Remington himself thought of cavalry officers as fastidious fashion plates. In *Pony Tracks*, he wrote of them as "a homogenous class . . . they have small waists, and their clothes fit them; they are punctilious; they respect forms, and always do the dignified and proper thing at the particular instant . . ." Even Remington's black-and-white graphic medium adds a degree of chic to his representations of these enviably dapper men.

We would be going too far to propose Frederic Remington as the Edgar Degas of the American West. And, in any event, that designation would still not solve the problem of his late paintings. Just where do they fit in?

After 1900, Remington's style crossed over not from Realism to Impressionism, but from Realism to Symbolism. He did not make his Realism more specific, more contemporary in its capture of a fleeting moment, as the Impressionists did, but rather the opposite. From a concrete, modern world, Remington moved to the realm of imagination and memory. He acknowledged his differences with the Impressionists himself when he said: "*I sometimes feel that I am trying to do the impossible in my pictures in not having a chance to work direct (from nature) but as there are no such people as I paint it's 'studio' or nothing, yet these transcripts from nature fellows who are so clever cannot compare with the imaginative men in the long run.*"

Remington must have had his late nocturnes in mind when he made this statement, because such works as *Moonlight Scouting Party* could not be painted outdoors, although the artist did make some sketches under a full moon. Remington's nocturnes are the masterpieces of his late style, and they are Symbolist, not Impressionist.

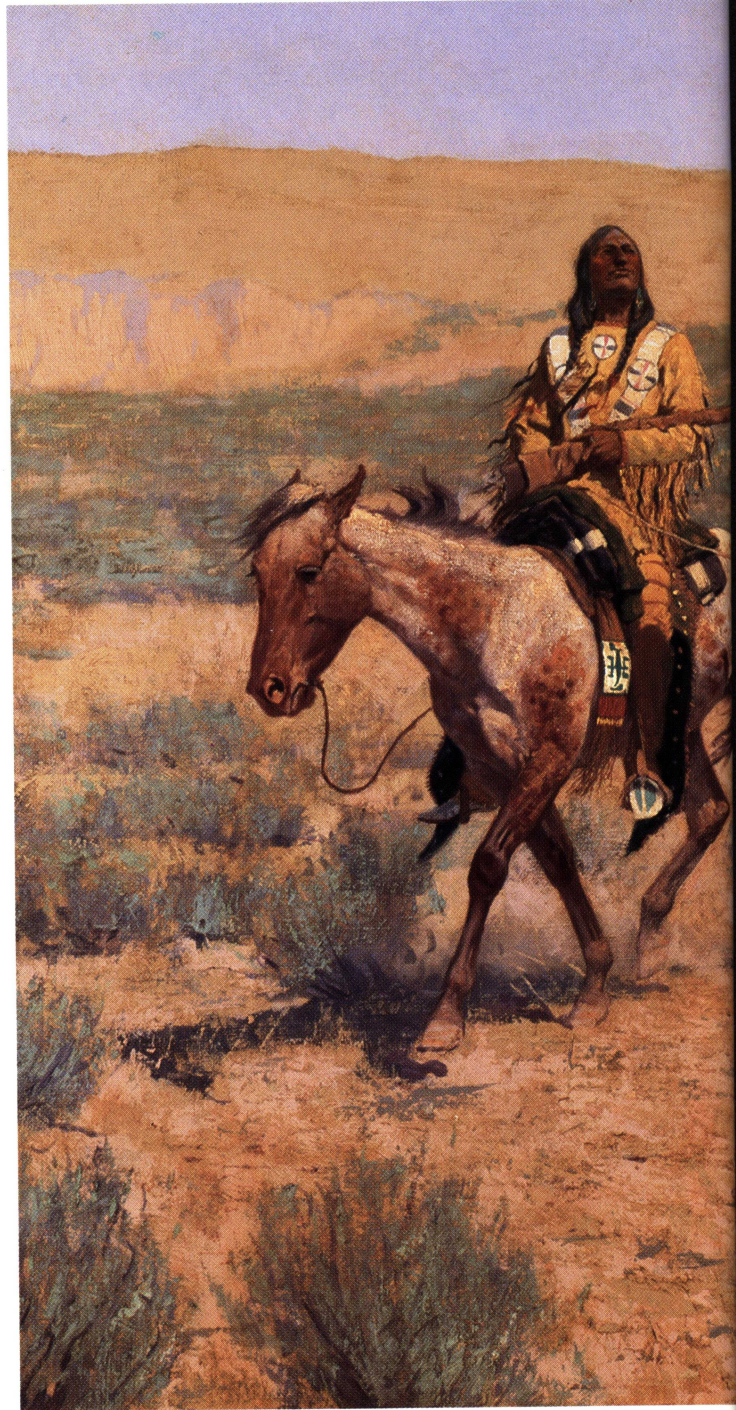


Frederic Remington

Impressionism is a style of particulars — what it looked like at a particular moment in a particular place. Its mood is upbeat and contemporary; it appears to have little message to impart beyond presenting simply what is. The Impressionist artist paints directly from the subject and tends to break up the image into a myriad of bright, contrasting colors. Symbolism, on the other hand, is a style of nostalgia. It presents a generalized view through a veil of revery in order to engage the viewer's emotions in a gently poetic way. The Symbolist artist works from memory, not from nature, to foster an evocative mood by means of a simple suggestive design. Color is important to the Symbolist painter, but it is muted rather than high-keyed.

Everything about Remington's late nocturnes is Symbolist. From on-the-spot reporting, Remington moved to an art of enchanted remembrance. The world of dreams is a nocturnal one. The West of Remington's nocturnes has been filtered through the painter's imagination to become the timeless distillation of a way of life which, by 1900, existed only in memory. On a trip to the Southwest in that year, a disappointed Remington noted dolefully that he might "never come West again — It is all brick buildings — derby hats and blue overalls — it spoils my early illusions — and they are *my* capital." To resort to a cliché, as the sun set on the heyday of the American frontier, Remington displaced from his art the violence of shoot-outs and cavalry raids at high noon in favor of the haunting spell cast by tales told around a starlit campfire. Remington's titles changed along with the tenor of his subjects. He gave the succinct name *Missing* to an 1899 picture of a cavalryman captured by Indians whose future is quite clear; a more mysterious aura emanates from a late nocturnal painting of Indian women huddled around a dead buffalo which Remington called *Hungry Moon*.

"After 1900, Remington's style crossed over not from Realism to Impressionism, but from Realism to Symbolism."





Frederic Remington, "Missing", 1899 30½ inches by 51¾ inches, oil on canvas

Remington's nocturnal paintings invite meditation rather than stimulate excitement. He composed the nighttime pictures around a few simple silhouettes, blurring and blending their edges and eliminating detail. Nothing is explicitly spelled out, but, by the same token, nothing is present that is not the result of careful consideration and reflection. Remington abandoned his earlier use of photographic "sketches" and the cultivation of an illustrator's rapid drawing technique. He passed long hours at his easel, searching for the most effective combination of color and shape.

Just as he wished, Remington did become a master of color in his late nocturnal paintings. But his colorism is based not on Impressionist brilliance and contrast, but on smoothly painted areas of a single subtly modulated hue, of dark blue, silvery green, or pale glowing yellow. Composed around a few notes and the harmonious transitions between them, Remington's nocturnal color is musical.

Remington's nostalgic themes, blurred draftsmanship, and melodious color in his nocturnal paintings were all directed toward one end: to strike a responsive chord in the viewer's imagination. This too is a Symbolist characteristic; the Symbolist artist does not make statements, but suggestions, inviting the viewer to complete the painting by drawing on sources within himself. In a revealing statement, Remington declared, "Big art is in the process of elimination. Cut down and out — do your hardest work outside the picture, and let your audience take away something to think about — to imagine."

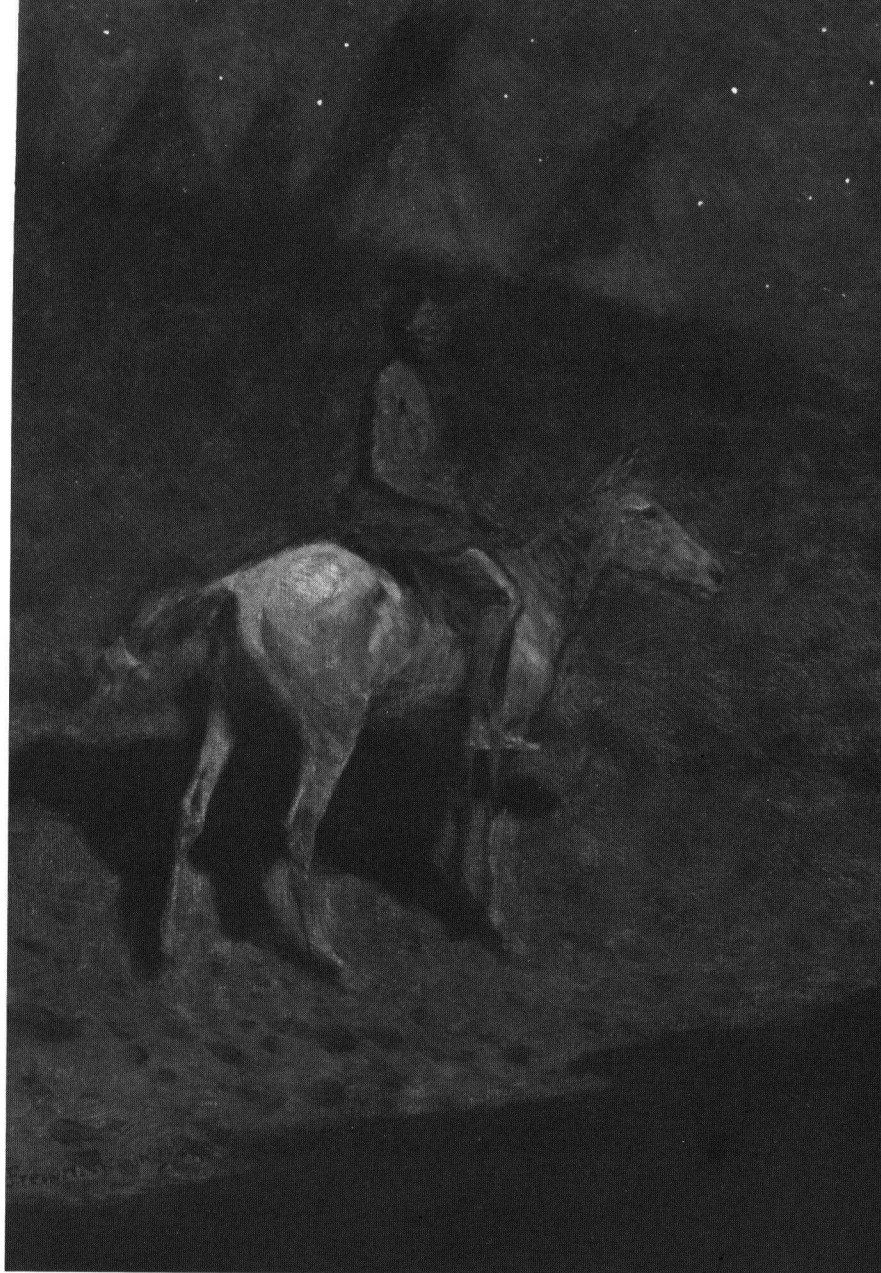
Remington was not the only American painter of the 1890s and early 1900s to step into dreamland. The Symbolist movement was an international one, and many of its adherents were citizens of the United States. (Some scholars of American art call the American variant of Symbolism Tonalism.) More than one American painter who has been called an "Impressionist" was in fact closer to Symbolism in his expression. John Twachtmen, whom Remington admired, also painted poetic mood pictures dominated by simple shapes and one or two finely modulated colors. Evocative nocturnal paintings won increasing critical approval from about 1890 on. After 1900, Remington's teacher and Connecticut neighbor Julian Alden Weir began to make twilight and nighttime scenes. Like Remington, Willard Metcalf, another Connecticut painter, first won high praise from the critics for a nocturnal painting, and its success prompted him to paint more night scenes.

The spiritual father of American Symbolist landscape was James McNeill Whistler, who, like Remington, shifted from a sharp-eyed Realism to Symbolism's evocation of feeling by means of poetic color and abstract design. As Peter Hassrick suggests, the immediate impetus for Remington's nocturnal pictures may have been an exhibition of the work of the California moonlight specialist Charles Rollo Peters, but the ultimate source of this manner of expression is the work of Whistler. Although the blustery Remington denigrated Whistler's paintings for looking like "the bottom of a cook stove," he attended a lecture by the notorious artist, according to his biographers Peggy and Harold Samuels. Whistler was the first nineteenth-century artist to create images of landscape and architecture shrouded by mist and darkness whose sole purpose was the stimulation of a dreamlike mood. Whistler gave his paintings musical titles, as Remington called his by metaphysical names; both wanted to signal that their pictures were more than mere reproductions of fact.

In a final art-historical twist, none other than the original Impressionist, Claude Monet himself, made paintings around 1900 which can only be described as Symbolist. Beginning with his series of *Haystacks* (1889-1893), some of which were exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition, Monet's hyperintensive study of momentary atmospheric effects led him, somewhat paradoxically, to create paintings that were no longer glimpses of the here and now, but suggestions of the universal. At some point, objective observation, pushed to the level of an obsession, becomes subjective expression. It happened in the work of Monet, just as it did in Remington's late paintings. Monet described the painting of the *Haystacks* as "a continual torture . . . it is enough to drive one raving mad, to render the weather, the atmosphere, the ambiance," just as, a decade later, Remington would speak to a young artist about the difficulty of painting reflected light on snow. "Just look at the beauty everywhere. Why can't we get it, come some where near it. It's maddening."

Monet and Remington discovered that the solution to the problem facing many painters at the end of the nineteenth century — how to adequately represent the complexity of nature on a piece of canvas — lay not in attempting to reproduce natural appearances, which they increasingly found to be an impossible task, but in creating poetic works derived from their inner experience of the outside world.

After 1900, for the first time in his career, Monet made



Frederic Remington, "The Night Rider", n.d., 18 inches by 12 inches, oil on canvas

pictures from memory. Following visits to London and to Venice, he painted in his studio pictures of architectural monuments blurred by mists of otherworldly color. He simplified form and eliminated detail in these late paintings. Like Remington, Monet relied not on the delineation of reality, but on the properties of two-dimensional design and of broad areas of ravishing color, often blue or purple, to obtain his effects.

Was Frederic Remington an Impressionist? It should be clear by now that a simple yes or no does not answer the question. In some ways — ironically, ways the artist would not have recognized himself — Remington's art was perfectly in tune with the aims of Impressionism, but when he consciously set out to emulate the style, he produced pictures that are very different in feeling and technique from

true Impressionist painting. However, in doing so he became part of an international movement to which the inventor of Impressionism also belonged for part of his career.

Pigeon-holing a painter as belonging to one or another "ism" does not always tell us very much. The work of a talented and dedicated artist is almost always too complex to be encompassed by a single term. It is a measure of Remington's artistic ability and integrity that in his search for new forms of expression, he created a body of work that eludes easy classification. What should be clear is that, in a number of ways, Remington was not simply an illustrator of western life, but very much a part of the larger artistic currents of his time. ◡

California Impressionism

BY FRED A. MYERS

IMPRESSIONIST IS ONE OF THOSE WORDS that can be used with a strict meaning or a broad meaning. It is often used broadly to describe art that does not include much detail, and when it is so used there is general agreement about what it means. Art specialists, however, tend to use the term more restrictively. Additionally, terms like post-impressionist, and California Impressionist are also used. What do these various "isms" describe? A brief historical review may be helpful.

As used by art historians the word impressionist designates the paintings that were shown in eight exhibitions held in France between 1874 and 1886. The term was excerpted sarcastically from the title of a painting by Claude Monet and quickly came to identify any work included in these exhibitions by such artists as Renoir, Pissarro, Sisley and Morisot. With repeating exhibitions of works by these and other artists the term acquired rather specific meaning. It was used to describe paintings completed outdoors usually in a rather short amount of time because the artist was attempting to record the light and atmosphere of the moment.

Quickly placed brushstrokes caught the general look of the scene without describing much detail. In these paintings brushstrokes often lay side by side without much attempt to blend together. Outdoor light is often intense, more intense even on an overcast day than is artificial light indoors. In an effort to capture the visual effects of intense light artists used bright colors. They mixed their reds, yellows and greens with white. They wanted even the shadowed sides of objects and figures to be coloristically vivid so they

eschewed black and dark grey substituting blue and purple instead. The French artists of the 1870s and 80s had recourse to theories of color that specified that the appearance of intense hues could be enhanced by placing side by side colors from opposite sides of the color wheel — red next to green, yellow next to purple.

Along with the impressionist change in color effects went a change in subject preference. Instead of the scenes from mythology and history which were customary in the official salon paintings, artists began to prefer to paint pictures of people on picnics, of Sunday boating outings, of tranquil village scenes and bustling city streets, of flowers in gardens and trees in meadows. All this was worked out in the 70s and 80s in France, and a remarkable thing gradually transpired. Instead of the word impressionism suggesting disparagement it came to suggest modern life and the beauty to be found in the everyday. Quite a number of artists came in one way or another under the spell of impressionism — artists such as Degas and Mary Cassatt, Gauguin and Van Gogh — each changing the original impulses of impressionism to their own purposes but all producing art that had a modern, informal look.

As with so much European innovation in the past, the new art had great influence in America. A group of American artists that called themselves "The Ten" exhibited together. Many of these artists preferred an impressionistic approach to painting. Included among them were such artists as J. Alden Weir, John H. Twachtman, William Merritt Chase, and the most thorough-going American Impressionist, Childe Hassam.

Fred A. Myers has been since 1978 director of Gilcrease Museum. His previous museum experience at Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh, Pa., involved considerable research on Impressionism.



Colin Campbell Cooper, "Kimberly Crest," 29 inches by 36 inches, oil on canvas



George Brandriff, "Steady as She Blows," 20 inches by 24 inches, oil on canvas

And quite naturally the style took root in California, a land of sunshine and beautiful scenery. From approximately 1885 onward, artists were among the many persons attracted to southern California. Why paint still lives in a studio when all outdoors beckoned daily? Gardens throbbed with color, the beach sparkled with light, the deserts blinded with sun, the mountains were not far away and looked even closer. No one could have prevented impressionism from finding a home in the bright informal life of California. The West has always meant liberation from restrictions and drabness. Artists came from all over the United States and from Europe to enjoy the sun and to report on their impressions by using paint and brush.

Leaders in the Southern California group were Elmer Wachtel and his wife Marion, Franz Bischoff, William Wendt, George Gardner Symons, Hanson D. Puthuff, Jack Wilkison Smith, and Guy Rose. Rose, the only California native of the group, was the closest to Monet in his approach to painting. Using broken brushwork very like Monet's, Rose gives the viewer a vigorous summary of impressionist light and color.

With the slightly later addition of artists such as Donna N. Shuster, known for her portraits, and Edgar Payne, the California group consists of a significant number of skilled artists — enough individual personalities working in a similar manner to comprise a recognizable "school". Edgar

Payne, with his immense talent and penchant for large scale and difficult subjects appears in retrospect to be the most significant of the group. His masterful handling of a variety of subjects establishes him as an artist of the first rank. Immediately recognizable are his renditions of such subjects as the mountains of the high Sierras, horse mounted riders under the vast sky of the desert, and sun-tinged riggings of sailboats in harbor.

Many of these California Impressionists achieved moderate success during their lifetimes. In addition to local exhibitions their work was shown and offered for sale in Chicago and New York. However, until recently few collectors beyond California have valued these works at anywhere near their intrinsic worth. In this regard they have shared the traditional fate of other significant art emanating from the West such as the landscapes of Bierstadt and Moran and the figures and action paintings of Remington and Russell.

In time quality will out, however, and oil paint on canvas is an enduring medium. At long last the best works of the California Impressionists are receiving the attention they deserve. Gilcrease Museum is proud to sponsor an extensive exhibition as a bellwether of a new era of appreciation for these beautiful and significant works of art. Comprised of the collection of Morton H. Fleischer, "Master Works of California Impressionism" is on view in the newly renovated temporary exhibition galleries. ▽



Jesse Botke, "Two Peacocks on a Grapevine," 30 inches by 25 inches, oil on board

Gilcrease Book Reviews

BY MILDRED LADNER THOMPSON

HAVE YOU EVER wondered how distinguished art collections are assembled? Is there a master plan? Or does a philosophy of collecting evolve, purchase after purchase?

Every serious museum fan has pondered this question. Thirty years ago, Aline B. Saarinen, studying the methods of 14 collectors in search of an answer, called the Gilcrease "a mountainous, heterogeneous collection of documents, rare books, artifacts, paintings and sculptures" and its possessor a man "who could no more stop collecting than he could stop reading." Yet she forecast its significance by including it among such prestigious collections as those of Isabella Stewart Gardner, J. Pierpont Morgan, Joseph Hirschhorn, the Rockefellers and Peggy Guggenheim.

Much has been published about the Gilcrease collection since Mrs. Saarinen's *The Proud Possessors* came out in 1958 but most of it has been descriptive: little has been done by way of analyzing Tom Gilcrease's *modus operandi*. Now, at last, there is a logical attempt at such analysis, and a pattern emerges.

Thomas Gilcrease and His National Treasure (\$50.00), written by museum director Fred A. Myers and published by the Thomas Gilcrease Museum Association, is a magnificently produced 144-page coffee table book bearing color plates. It also contains essays by curators Anne Morand and Sarah Erwin, senior curator Dan McPike and assistant director Thomas C. Brayshaw.

Following Myers' introduction, "The Legacy of Thomas Gilcrease," there is a lengthy section on single acquisitions by American artists such as Copley, Charles Willson Peale, Sully, Cropsey, Jarvis, Inness, Tait, Homer and Sargent. The color plates represent some of the museum's key paintings — Thomas Eakins' portrait of the Zuni ethnologist Frank Hamilton Cushing, posed amidst his artifacts in Eakins' studio; the unfinished canvas, *Penn's Treaty with the Indians*, by Benjamin West, and the smaller Edward Hicks treatment of the same event. Here too are some of the paintings that cling to the corners of one's memory — the haunting Farny canvas, *The Sorcerer*; the equally memora-

ble *Gregorita*, Robert Henri's portrait of a Santa Clara pueblo girl. Library holdings in this classification are represented by Joan Blaeu's *Atlas Maior*, a seventeenth century map so exquisite that copies of it were presented by the Netherlands to important personages, and a Magnolia illustration from Mark Catesby's *A Natural History of Carolina, Florida and the Bahamas* (1731-43). Fully half of the volume is devoted to such famous single acquisitions, spanning the period from the oldest extant letter from the New World, Diego Columbus' report to the Archbishop of Toledo, to the work of twentieth century painters such as Andrew Wyeth and John Sloan.

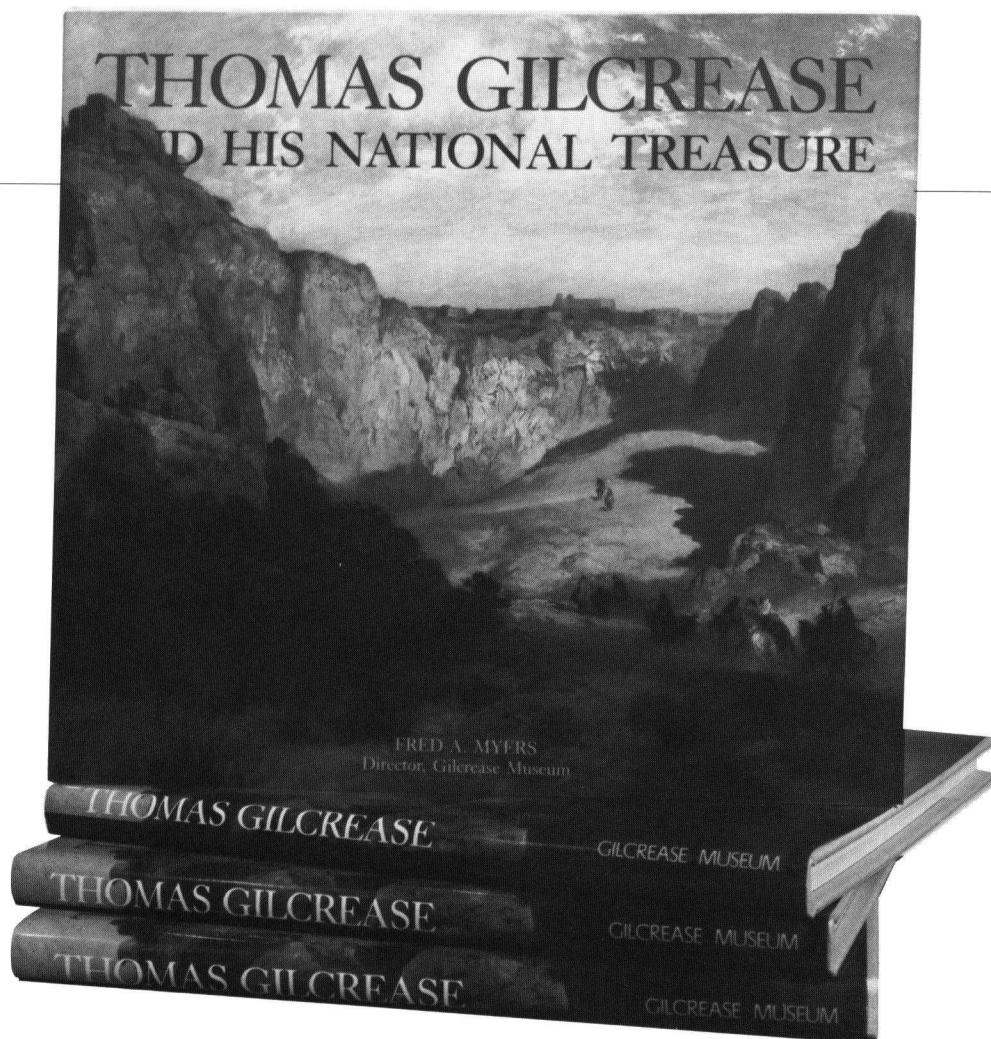
Anne Morand's essay on Gilcrease's custom of buying studio collections of such artists as Alfred Jacob Miller, Thomas Moran, W.M. Cary and Edward Deming is illustrated with three Miller and three Moran oils as well as portraits of both men. The essay on the collector's attempt to build significant collections bears illustrations of the work of Audubon, Bierstadt, Seth Eastman, Charles Bird King and John Mix Stanley.

Purchases from the artists themselves include the Taos artists. The last group of major acquisitions dealt with in this unique volume concerns the purchase of other collectors' entire holdings, the Catlin materials of Sir Thomas Phillipps and the American western collection of Dr. Philip Gillett Cole.

The book closes with a representative portrayal of artifacts from the Olmec, Hopewell, Eskimo and Hopi cultures.

Two recently released books from the University of Oklahoma Press consider the role of ceremonial rites in Native American culture.

Traditional Papermaking and Paper Cult Figures of Mexico (\$24.95) results from the discovery by anthropologist Alan Sandstrom and his wife, Pamela Effrein Sandstrom, of a Nahuatl Indian religious ceremony in which a shaman cuts colored tissue papers into doll-like figures, a tradition dating



back to pre-Hispanic times. Detailed line drawings and fascinating color photographs illustrate this scholarly work.

The Wolves of Heaven by Karl H. Schlesier (\$25.00), subtitled *Cheyenne Shamanism, Ceremonies, and Pre-historic Origins*, reconstructs a Cheyenne tribal ceremony extinct since 1927. It also places the Cheyennes' world understanding in the context of Algonquian thought and documents a common heritage that survived "in both North America and northern Siberia through the European invasions and in significant aspects to the present." Drawings are by Dick West (*Wah-pah-nah-yah*).

Were Major Ridge and his son John, along with their kinfolk, Elias Boudinot and Stand Watie, convinced that it was the better part of wisdom for the Cherokees to leave

their rich homelands for Oklahoma — or did they sell out to the U.S. government? Was Chief John Ross, who fought emigration and was their bitter political enemy, a hero or a villain?

Thurman Wilkins has incorporated the new scholarship of the past fifteen years, including these questions, in the revised second edition of his classic, *Cherokee Tragedy: The Ridge Family and the Decimation of a People* (University of Oklahoma Press, \$24.95). Wilkins is best known in Gilcrease circles for his biography of Thomas Moran. ▢

Mildred Ladner Thompson was formerly the book editor for the *Tulsa World*. She is the author of two books drawn from the Gilcrease collection of paintings by O. C. Seltzer and William de la Montagne Cary.

Gardens

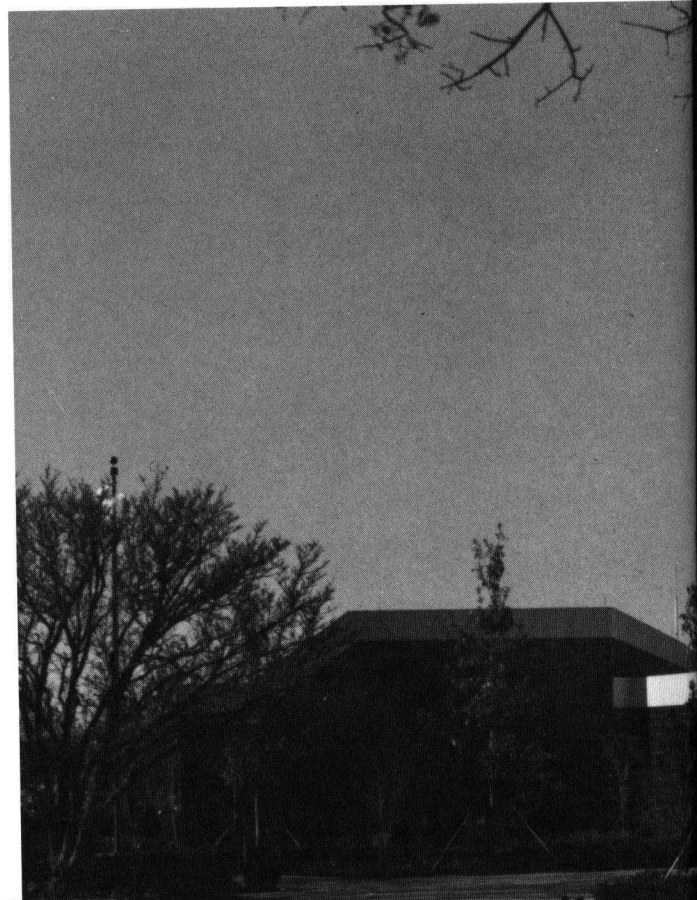
BY JOE BRAUN

AMONG THE WIDE-RANGING interests of Thomas Gilcrease was a passion for encouraging things to grow. Long before he established a museum, he was nurturing plants on his estate northwest of Tulsa.

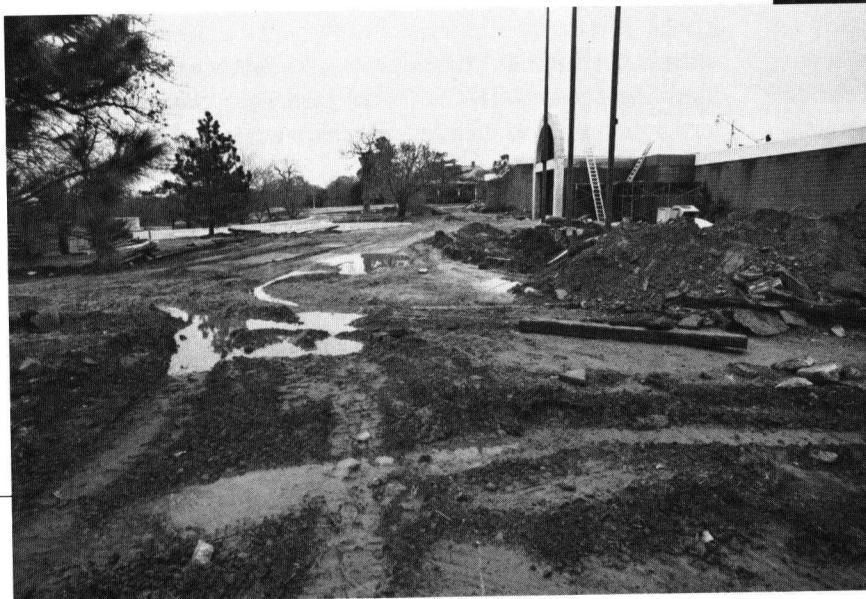
For north facing slopes he used woodland plants native to Oklahoma and jonquils which were allowed to naturalize. He built dams to fit the contour and to channel precious water to the roots of specimen trees. He personally cultivated the soil for his flowers. In the early days of the museum, visitors often mistook him for the gardener.

When plans were drawn for the enlargement of the museum, a grounds committee headed by Patricia Wilson Wheeler began meeting to draw similar plans for the melding of landscape and museum. Mrs. Frank X. Henke, chairman of the board of the Thomas Gilcrease Museum Association, and Thomas C. Brayshaw of the museum staff met with Carl Young III, representative of the City of Tulsa, and

Joe Braun of the Jacob Braun Company of Tulsa is under contract with the City of Tulsa to originate plans for development of the Gilcrease Museum grounds. It was a portion of his plans that guided the recent relandscaping of the museum entrance.



Gilcrease Museum entrance with new landscaping



Gilcrease Museum grounds during construction

for Gilcrease



members of the Tulsa Park and Recreation board, led by Hugh McKnight. A sub-committee, co-chaired by Pat Wheeler and Mrs. Lee Harrington, undertook the on-going task of raising funds to make the landscaping plans possible.

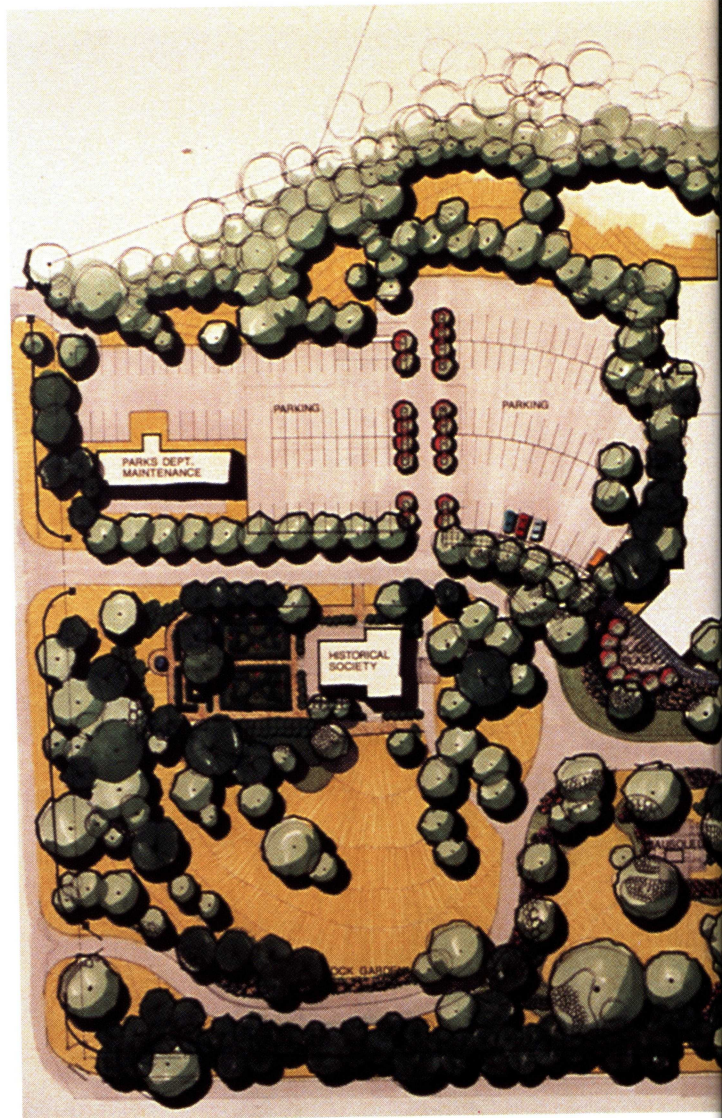
The committee sought and benefitted from the counsel of Charles Chief Boyd and recently hired Joe Braun, landscape architect with the Jacob Braun Company, Inc. of Tulsa to plan and develop construction documents for the gardens. Previously, Mr. Braun had functioned as the chief landscape architect for the pedestrian mall in downtown Tulsa, had converted Warren Place Office Park from derelict land to a wooded office park, and designed the complete renovation of the grounds at Hillcrest Medical Center campus.

The museum site is located on the eastern promontory of the Osage Hills and displays native oaks, hickory and ash trees as well as species of flowering trees and evergreens that Mr. Gilcrease introduced to the site. Besides the museum, which has expanded to 127,000 feet, the site harbors a small mausoleum, parking areas, and driveways. The site has an excellent view of the skyline of Tulsa to the southeast and a beautiful view of the Osage Hills to the west.

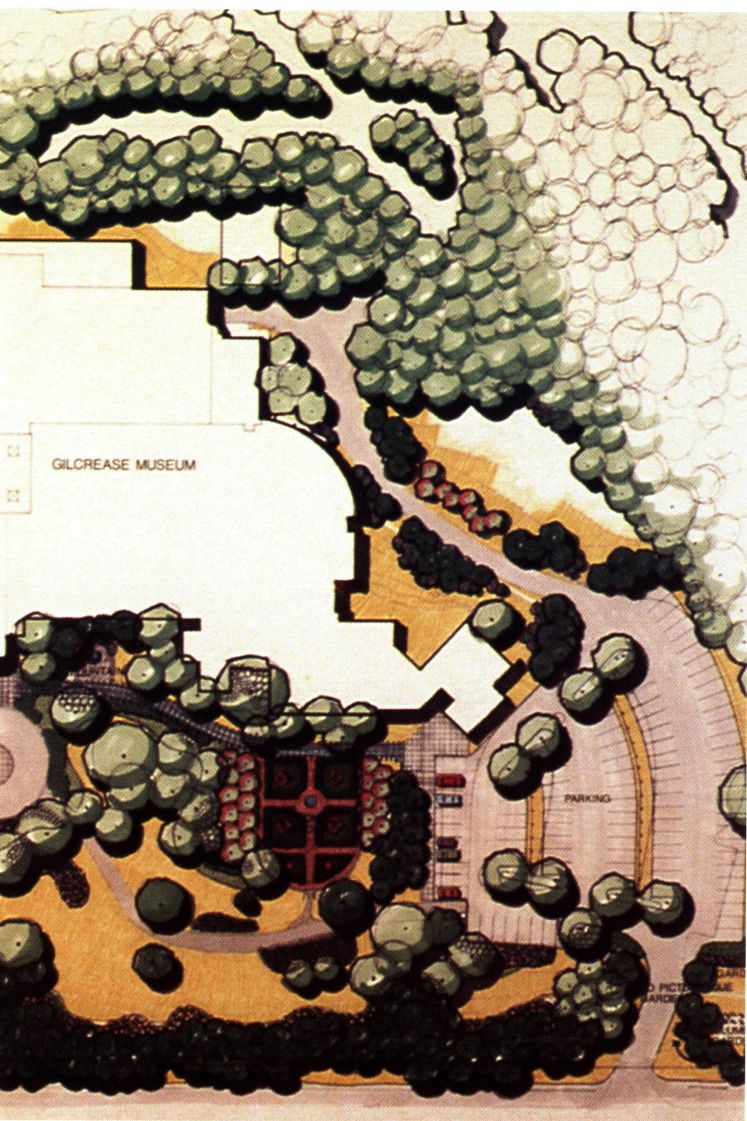
Natural features of the 125-acre site include an extensive north facing rock escarpment, a deep rugged ravine, three ponds, wooded areas and creeks. There is an abundance of wild flowers and a variety of bird species, deer and small woodland animals.

These attributes are to be utilized in a master plan foreseeing greatly increased visitation to the museum. The grounds are to be brought up to the high standards of the museum through the use of appropriate theme gardens indicative of the periods of American culture represented in the art collection.

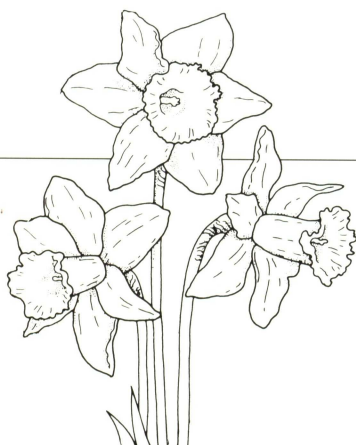
It was determined that there would be gardens based on such themes as the pre-Columbian, Pioneer, Colonial and Victorian eras. A picturesque garden, an English rock garden and a viewing rest area dedicated to the Gillies, the museum volunteer corps, were incorporated into the master plan.



Thomas Gilcrease and his daughter Des Cygne hold hands in a patch of poppies.



Plot Plan for grounds immediately around the museum building by Joe Braun



The slopes, topography, drainage, vegetation and views were analyzed with the prospect of providing parking for an additional 100 cars without reducing the environmental quality of the grounds. Parking lots were planned for the north and south sides of the entrance. Linking the lots was a gently curving pedestrian spine.

The grounds committee originally selected an area east of the museum for all of the theme gardens, but due to the scale of the gardens and the need to view them as separate entities, Braun dispersed the theme gardens, screening each one from the other. Russell Studebaker, chief horticulturist for the Tulsa Park and Recreation Department, worked closely with Braun on the theme garden requirements. The gardens will be located either along the main pedestrian spine or on trails derived from the main spine and will be accessible to the handicapped.

Evergreens will be used throughout the grounds to screen undesirable views. Masses of azaleas, whose blooming time should correspond with the annual Gilcrease Rendezvous in early May, will be planted throughout the site.

A portion of the total cost of \$1.2 million has been funded to date, with the Telex Corporation making the initial donation. Completed at present are the flag plaza adjacent to the entrance and the planting of 1,600 azaleas as well as an alley of Shumard oaks along the central pedestrian spine. Plantings adjacent to the front of the building are in place and the irrigation system has been installed. Additional parking will be built during the summer.

The following theme gardens are presently unfunded:

ENGLISH ROCK GARDEN

The English Rock Garden is marked on the west by a rock exposed by the construction of a new entry drive. This rock outcropping will be excavated selectively and enhanced to yield a variety of planting areas for herbs, flowers and groundcover. The grading necessary to accommodate the widening of the Gilcrease Museum Road to the east of the site will create a similar area so that in the future the entire

entry zone will traverse the rock garden. A walk and trail will connect the rock garden with other site features.

COLONIAL GARDEN

In the Colonial era, gardens consisted of food plants arranged in a decorative manner and surrounded by wooden picket fences used to keep out cows and sheep. This garden is patterned after those at Mount Vernon with some attributes of the Williamsburg gardens. The planned gardens are to be arranged symmetrically along a central walkway with secondary walks leading to the sites of flowering trees on the north and south edges. Statues and sundials were placed at the ends of such walks during the Colonial period, an era of refinement in American gardens. This garden will be located east of the pedestrian spine and north of the main entrance.

VICTORIAN GARDEN

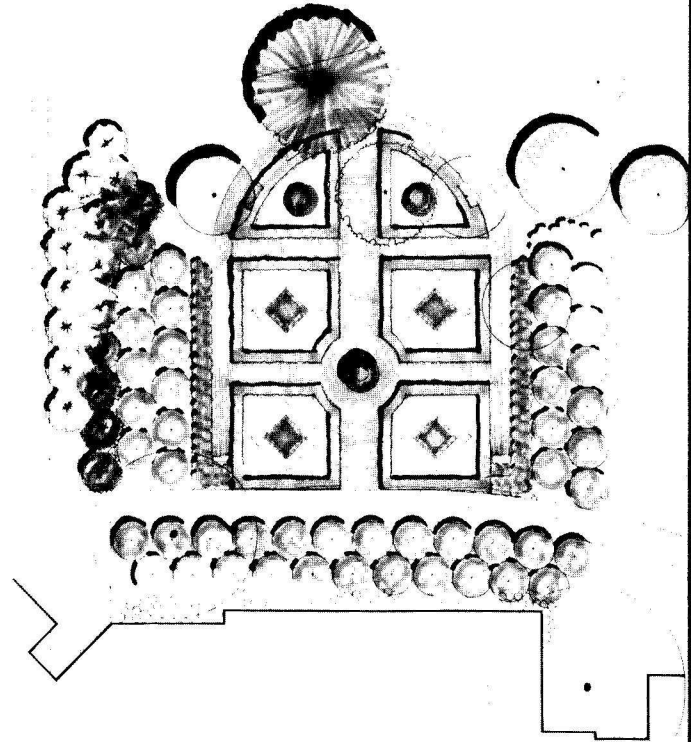
The Victorian garden was a further development with more elaborate fences and more decorative gates as well as garden structures. Lawn areas became integral parts of the gardens; distant views played an important role. Focal points were accented with statues, urns, treillage and fountains. A wide variety of plants were massed together in the Victorian gardens, much as Thomas Gilcrease collected his plants. The Victorian Garden will be located south of his home.

THE PICTURESQUE GARDEN

This garden will include two of the three ponds on the property. The main pond will have a fountain in the center and a stone bridge, with additional planting on the edge of the pond. From this point visitors will be able to follow a trail north of the museum area and beyond to the fields.

THE PRE-COLUMBIAN GARDEN

Pre-Columbian Gardens provided the native American with food, fiber and medicine. Corn, beans, tobacco and various herbs and plants useful for dyes or medicine were planted. Corn plants were spaced four to five feet apart and served to support the beans. Areas between the hills were planted in peas with tobacco off to the side. The Gilcrease Pre-



Drawing of Colonial Gardens for Gilcrease Museum by Joe Braun

Columbian Garden will be a replica of America's earliest garden and will be tucked into a flat area northeast of the museum.

PIONEER GARDEN

The Pioneer Garden will be reminiscent of frontier life before statehood. Oklahoma's pioneers generally planted gardens only at ranches and base camps. They generated food for all the people involved in the area's primary activities, such as mining or ranching. These were similar to today's truck farms with simple fences to keep the livestock away from the vegetables. Some artifacts collected by Mr. Gilcrease will be incorporated into the Pioneer Garden to

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MDCCLXXVIII

New Principles of Gardening by Batty Langley, a book bearing the signature of G. Washington, 1760. This book, part of the Gilcrease archival collection, belonged to George Washington; it was recently on loan to Mount Vernon for display there but can be seen now in the Discovery/Freedom Gallery of Gilcrease Museum.

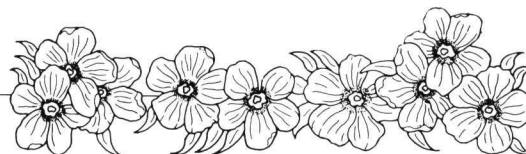
lend authenticity to the setting.

Among other site features comprising the Gardens for Gilcrease plan will be interpretive markers to describe natural and historic features of the grounds. A handsome and readable graphics system will name each point of interest and describe its importance.

Picnic tables and benches will be strategically placed throughout the grounds to enable the visitor to have a variety of experiences within the diversity of the Osage Hills.

The Gardens for Gilcrease are being substantially constructed by private funding. The Bernsen Foundation, Bovaird Supply Company, Mervin Bovaird Foundation,

Telex Corporation, Phoenix Resources and Pat Wheeler have made major donations to date. In order not to tax the operations budget, all features have been designed with ease of maintenance in mind. The plan's implementation is well under way and the initial construction phase has been completed by the firm of Clifton Landscape Company and the irrigation firm of Cotten Engineering. The Gardens for Gilcrease will be a new experience for the visitor parallel to the art and artifact treasure inside the museum. The visitor will be able to experience American gardens throughout the ages as well as natural areas in the Osage Hills, a unique living legacy of immense variety and richness. ◻



GARDENS FOR GILCREASE

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	Inside Front Cover
Was Remington an Impressionist? ..	
California Impressionism	20
Book Reviews	24
Gardens for Gilcrease	26

FRONT COVER:

"The Stampede," by Frederic Remington, 27 inches by 40 inches, oil on canvas.

BACK COVER:

"Cambria, c. 1924," by J. Christopher Smith, 24 inches by 30 inches, oil on canvas, from the Morton H. Fleischer collection.

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All illustrations in this issue are from the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art except those on pages 21, 22, 23 and back cover. Those paintings are from the Morton H. Fleischer collection.



"Masterworks of California Impressionism"



Franz A. Bischoff, "Scattered Farms on the River Bank, Utah," 30 inches by 40 inches, oil on canvas

Ninety-eight paintings by California artists working in the Impressionist style will be featured in the first public exhibition of the FFCA (Corp.), Morton H. Fleischer Collection.

The "Masterworks of California Impressionism" exhibition will be on display at Gilcrease Museum in the new special exhibition galleries February 20 through May 22.

Included in the exhibition are some of the finest examples of California Impressionism, all painted between 1900 and 1950. Complementing the exhibition is a newly published Gilcrease edition of the book, *Masterpieces of California Impressionism*:

The FFCA, Morton H. Fleischer Collection, available for purchase in the Gilcrease Museum Shop.