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THE GILCREASE

MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN HISTORY AND ART

Volume 4, Number 3, July, 1982



Amon Carter



Oklahoma



Mayan Calendar

Front Cover — Ease (1887), oil, 48" x 52" by William Michael Harnett

Back Cover — Mayan symbols representing the months taken from Tres Codices.

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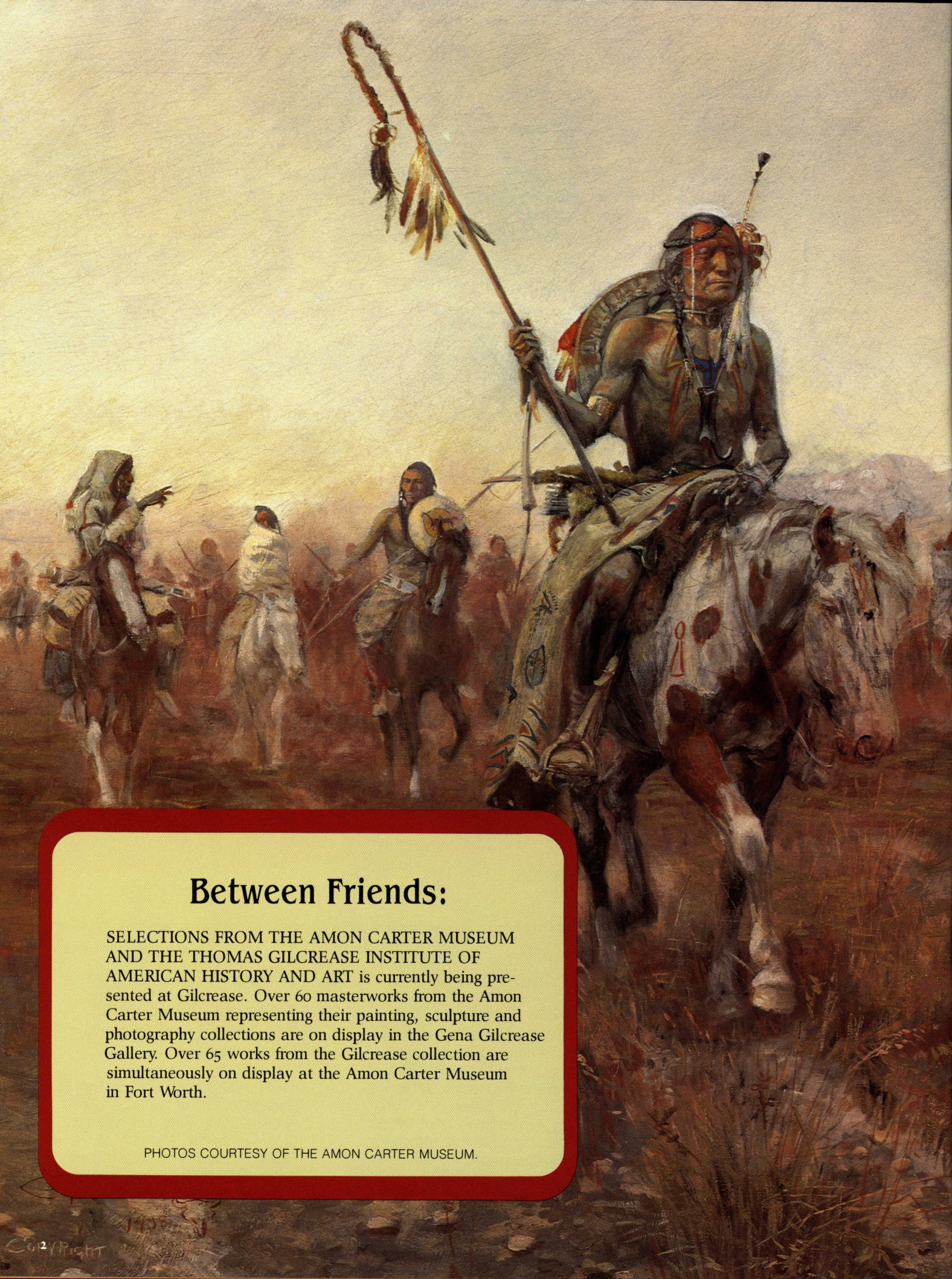
BETWEEN FRIENDS: Selections from the Amon Carter Museum and the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art in the Gena Gilcrease Gallery.

Over 60 masterworks of American painting, sculpture and photographs representing the collection of this distinguished sister museum.

October 15 - November 30

OSCAR HOWE RETROSPECTIVE exhibit in the Gena Gilcrease Gallery.

100 paintings representing the life work of one of the most important 20th century Indian artists. Organized by the University of South Dakota and the Oscar Howe Art Center with the co-sponsorship of the Gilcrease Museum.



Between Friends:

SELECTIONS FROM THE AMON CARTER MUSEUM AND THE THOMAS GILCREASE INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN HISTORY AND ART is currently being presented at Gilcrease. Over 60 masterworks from the Amon Carter Museum representing their painting, sculpture and photography collections are on display in the Gena Gilcrease Gallery. Over 65 works from the Gilcrease collection are simultaneously on display at the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE AMON CARTER MUSEUM.

A Look at a Legacy

The Amon Carter Museum of Western Art

By Carol Clark

Sometime in the 1930s the great Oklahoma humorist Will Rogers introduced Amon Carter to the paintings and sculpture of Charles M. Russell. This introduction began a life-long odyssey for Carter who would continue collecting western art until his death in 1955. By that time he had amassed one of the most important collections of western art in the world, which became the nucleus of the museum he established in his will and which opened in 1961.

Amon G. Carter was a self-made man. The son of a blacksmith, he was born in 1879 in an unchinked log cabin in Crafton, Texas. He left school after the fifth grade and set out on his own at the age of 13. Some years later he went to Fort Worth and entered the newspaper business. He became publisher of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* and later owned radio and television stations in North Texas. In 1937 Amon Carter struck oil in West Texas and his collecting of western art, begun two years earlier on borrowed money, rose

The Medicine Man (1908), oil, 30 1/8 x 48 1/8" by Charles Marion Russell

with his earnings.

The first Remington Carter purchased was *His First Lesson*, which he discovered at an art dealer's gallery on 57th Street in New York. This painting always held a prominent place in his collection as it does today in the museum he established. Carter's collection continued to grow in significant ways: in 1945 he acquired Remington's masterpiece, *A Dash for the Timber* and he purchased the Mint Bar collection of Russell's works in 1952. The collection Carter left at his death, of over 400 paintings, watercolors, and sculpture, was almost exclusively the work of these two pioneering western artists. His collection remains the core of the museum's holdings which have been expanded during the past twenty years to include a broad range of American art of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell

Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell were Amon Carter's favorite artists. Although the two art-



In Without Knocking (1909), oil, 20 1/8 x 29 7/8" by Charles Marion Russell



His First Lesson (1903), oil, 27¼ x 40" by Frederic Remington

ists and their work differ greatly, they shared a love of the Old West and a desire to preserve western life in paint.

Two paintings in Carter's collection perfectly illustrate his love of the West and the poignance of its passing. *His First Lesson* shows cowboys trying to tame a wild bronc, a metaphor for the West to which civilization was fast approaching. The cowboys themselves epitomized Remington's ideal characters, "men with the bark on," as he often called them, in whose hands lay the West's and indeed America's destiny.

The Fall of the Cowboy, in contrast to *His First Lesson*, depicts the end of the cowboy's brief era and ultimately the closing of the West itself. Here is enacted a scene which shows two of the primary

reasons for the end of the trail drive and open ranges: the barbed-wire fence and the terrible Montana winter of 1886-1887 which killed thousands of cattle. The somber palette and defeated stance of the horse contrast sharply with the brilliant colors and lively bronc of *His First Lesson*.

Remington's masterpiece, *A Dash for the Timber*, shows the excitement and peril of the cowboy's life. Monumental in size (about 4 x 7 feet), *Dash* presented to the nineteenth century audience all the elements of grand and heroic struggle for dominance of the western frontier. Even in 1889 it was as nostalgic a view of the West as it is today.

Danger was ever-present on the frontier, especially for cowboys and soldiers in the western Arizona Ter-



A Dash for the Timber (1889), oil, 48 1/4 x 84 1/8" by Frederic Remington





Ball Play of the Sioux on the St. Peters River in Winter (1848), oil, 25 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 35 $\frac{1}{4}$ " by Seth Eastman

Exhibit...

ritory, scene of a *A Dash for the Timber*. Here eight cowboys, gear hastily strapped to their mounts and pack horse, flee from a ferocious band of Apaches. The success of the canvas lies in its creator's talents for depicting action illusionistically. The men's horses, all of which are severely foreshortened and painted with hooves off the ground in a fast gallop, seem to burst off the canvas. Only the broken log serves to tie the action firmly to the ground, as dust diffuses the brilliant light of the Southern Plains. Remington's choice of a tight, linear style for the figures contrasts with the softer, more impressionistic treatment of the landscape. In *Dash* Remington combined brilliant light, dust, purple shadows, and the specific details of cowboy life to convey a scene of flight from danger as

powerful as any western artist envisioned.

Unlike Remington and his ideal of "men with the bark on," Charlie Russell took a humorous view of the West. Whether he painted a skunk in camp, cowboys' night out on the town, or an Indian romance, he kept a sense of humor about men and their foibles on the frontier. While Remington had professional art training, Russell was self-taught and lived rather than just traveled in the West, as did Remington. Russell's claim to be a "cowboy artist" was genuine.

Yet Russell's vision was as poignant as Remington's. In *Lost in a Snow Storm - We are Friends* he shows an incident of camaraderie between Indians and cowboys during the devastating winter of 1886-1887 which had so profoundly affected Remington as well in *The Fall of the Cowboy*.

Russell is best known for paintings like *Smoke of a .45*, in which a card game has turned into a gunfight, and *In without Knocking* which shows cowboys living it up in town before the beginning of a long cattle drive. Quieter in mood and palette is *The Medicine Man* which Russell considered one of his best paintings. Here a Blackfoot medicine man leads the tribe on its seasonal move, as the artist successfully conveys the Indian's dignity.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The museum's nineteenth century collection is especially strong in landscape paintings. Frederic Edwin Church's *Evening After a Storm* is a prime example of landscape painting now known as the Hudson River School. Here, in a picture of Church's early period, large expanses of sky and water occupy our attention and focus our perceptions on the almost palpable wet atmosphere Church so successfully depicts. Seemingly unimportant, the small figures in the painting, especially the boatman, signify man's civilizing or perhaps destructive force in nature as the industrial presence of a mill intrudes upon the idyllic American wilderness. Mysterious as well is the abandoned picnic basket in the foreground which may indicate the end of America's youthful innocence.

Part of this American love of the countryside was a curiosity about the lands West of the Mississippi, a locale which is represented in many of the works collected by the Amon Carter Museum. George Catlin, Karl Bodmer, and Alfred Jacob Miller, whose works can be seen in the collection, were the three great exploration artists of the 1830s who ventured West in search of first-hand experience on the frontier.

Many other artists served in the United States Army and found their romantic subjects ready-made at remote Indian outposts strung along the frontier. Seth Eastman, who had received artistic training at West Point, was stationed at Fort Snelling, Minnesota Territory, from 1841 to 1848. Captain Eastman remained at the Fort year-round and was able to observe the Indians during their winter activities, something even the peripatetic Catlin was forced to imagine. Eastman painted at the Fort and sent his works back to New York, where many were dispersed at the annual American Art-Union lottery. The museum's *Ball-Play of the Sioux on the St. Peters River in Winter* is such a picture and was distributed at the Art-Union in 1851, only to disappear for 125 years. It was only in 1978, when the descendants of the original owner decided to sell the painting, that Eastman scholars were able to

see a work mentioned prominently in nineteenth century art criticism.

The painting shows Indians during the winter months, a relatively quiet season for the Northern tribes, when they would separate into smaller groups of several families each and camp along the edge of the woods or in a protected river valley. Besides hunting, there was time for crafts, storytelling, and games. This game, called *la crosse* by the French, was played on the plains in summer and on ice in winter, here set against barren trees and a cluster of tips.

A particularly beautiful passage is the still life of wagered goods to the left of the brilliantly attired spectators lounging on the small knoll above the river. Absorbed in the ball-play, these figures contrast sharply with the cool white ice and dull pink sky against which the game is played. Eastman perfectly captured the excitement of this sport in this picturesque setting.

The romance of the West continued to affect painters in the late nineteenth century. Thomas Moran, however, turned to landscape, rather than Indian life, for his subjects. Moran began his long career as a western artist by accompanying Ferdinand V. Hayden's survey into the Yellowstone region in 1871. For the next fifty years the West was Moran's primary subject and he continued to travel there almost every summer.

The scenes which are so familiar to us today, Pike's Peak, the Rocky Mountains, Yellowstone, and the



A Group of Sioux (1845), oil, 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ " by Charles Deas



Sunrise, Yosemite Valley, oil, 36 3/8 x 52 3/8" by Albert Bierstadt

Two Hummingbirds Above a White Orchid
(1870), oil, 18 1/8 x 10" by Martin Johnson Heade



Exhibit. . .

Grand Canyon of the Colorado, were revelations to nineteenth century eyes more accustomed to the tamer scenery of the eastern seaboard and Mississippi River. Moran's paintings, such as *Cliffs of Green River*, fulfilled the public's desire to visually comprehend the vast western territories. The quiet, almost pastoral view of the West expressed in Worthington Whit-tredege's *On the Cache La Poudre River, Colorado*,

Painted in the centennial year, contrasts with the overt drama of works by Moran and Albert Bierstadt.

Moran's great popularity was preceded by that of Albert Bierstadt's frankly overblown and romantic vi-sions of the West. Bierstadt's name is associated with the Rockies and Yosemite, subjects he painted many times, and beautifully represented in *Sunrise, Yosemite Valley*. Bierstadt, trained in Dusseldorf, Germany, found western light very expressive of the moods of



Ranchos Church, Taos, New Mexico, 1930 (1930), oil, 24 x 36" by Georgia O'Keeffe

Exhibit. . .

the landscape, much as did the painters called luminists: John F. Kensett, Fitz Hugh Lane, and Martin Johnson Heade.

A profound interest in the meaning of light preoccupied many landscape artists of the mid-nineteenth century. Fitz Hugh Lane's *Boston Harbor*, full of clipper ships and a side-wheel steamer, is set against the topographically correct outline of the Boston shore.

Lane's position as the foremost American marine painter derives from his ability to paint light and to compose within measured space.

Martin Johnson Heade may have known Lane's paintings and learned from the older artist's mastery of reflected light; yet Heade carried his interest in light to greater extremes, giving his works a powerful, mysterious presence. He traveled constantly around the United States and to South America, journeys which influenced his choice of exotic birds and flowers such as *Two Hummingbirds above a White Orchid*. Here the artist combined his skills as a still life painter and

landscapist in a rich, complex, and mysterious composition.

Heade's favorite subjects were the salt marshes along the eastern seaboard, such as the Amon Carter Museum's *Marshfield Meadows, Massachusetts*. For Heade the stacks of hay became protagonists in a drama played out at different times of the day and in many different lights as he examined their expressive potential.

Although Heade's best pictures, such as *Thunderstorm over Narragansett Bay*, were based upon observation of actual locations, they were recreated from memory to become visionary evocations of remembered sites. *Thunderstorm over Narragansett Bay* is a masterpiece of American painting. There are no known studies for it, and it is felt that Heade never before or again equaled its grandeur and beauty.

The awesome, exquisite force of nature is Heade's subject, and he focuses our perceptions on the moment just before the full force of the storm breaks. The sailors seem to know they are powerless against such

strength, and there is no hurry as they come ashore and drop their sails. Infinitely varied in its treatment of water and sky, Heade's painting is the ultimate statement about man's relationship to storms and the sea.

The tradition of still life painting coincided with a rising interest in landscape and genre painting early in the nineteenth century. In works such as *Abundance*, by the German immigrant Severin Roesen, fruit and flowers represent the richness of American society in the years prior to the Civil War.

Such lushness is distinctly missing from the works of John F. Peto, who lived alone and apart from society in his New Jersey studio. In paintings like *Lamps of Other Days*, Peto explored the meaning of worn and homely objects that had personal associations. In a "shelf" picture like this Peto precariously balanced the composition through roughened textures and shapes and used the muted colors and apparent disarray of

derelict lamps and candlesticks to reflect the introspective mood of America at the end of the nineteenth century.

The Irish-born still life painter William Michael Harnett preferred refined, elegant, and worldly objects in contrast to Peto's used and personal ones. Harnett was a financially successful painter and had many patrons who wished to have themselves commemorated in "portraits" of their possessions, such as *Ease*, commissioned by the Holyoke, Massachusetts, paper manufacturer James T. Abbe. With the exception of Harnett's flute, most of the items in the painting appear to be from Abbe's collection. Abbe sold the painting to Collis P. Huntington and it was believed to have been lost in the San Francisco earthquake of 1906. It reappeared in 1971, very possibly damaged by the fire and trimmed on all four sides as a result.

Ease is a "trompe l'oeil," or "fool-the-eye," painting, which was popular in the 1880s. One compelling ele-



Crossing the Pasture (c. 1872), oil, 26 1/8 x 38 1/8" by Winslow Homer



Earth Cooling, Mexico (1932), oil, 24½ x 33⅞" by Marsden Hartley

Exhibit. . .

ment is the lighted cigar which threatens to burn through the paper and sheet music to the rug below. While we are tempted to reach out and snatch away the cigar, it remains frozen in a moment of action by the fine, realistic painting technique of Harnett.

The best-known artist of the nineteenth century today is Winslow Homer, who began to paint scenes of rural childhood in the late 1860s after a successful career as an illustrator. In the Catskill Mountain setting of *Crossing the Pasture* Homer reinforced the American admiration for the sturdiness and resourcefulness of boyhood, even within the depressed New

England economy of the 1870s.

The children are bathed in bright country sunshine and are silhouetted against folded hills. The older boy shoulders a branch and takes a protective stance against an unseen but clearly felt danger as the younger boy moves behind and closer to him. They may be returning from school late in the afternoon or pausing to rest after filling their buckets with berries. The smaller child also appears in Homer's well-known painting *Snap the Whip* which is closely related in date, composition, and theme to *Crossing the Pasture*.

Most American Impressionists preferred to paint an outdoor setting, but Mary Cassatt, who chose to live

her adult life in Paris, concentrated on figures, often devoting herself to the theme of mother and child. From about 1880 on she chose country women and their children as her subjects. Cassatt painted *Mother and Daughter*, *Both Wearing Large Hats* (also known as *Fillette au Grand Chapeau*) about 1900-1901 while at Chateau Beaufresne, her country house near Paris. In this painting a model and a young girl, possibly her daughter, each wears a large colorful hat as they sit against a backdrop suggestive of a garden setting. The child's straw hat, more suited in size to a woman, provides the focus of the picture, especially in its outline of a rich, black, velvet ribbon. Beneath the large bow and cluster of flowers on her hat, the child's attention is drawn away from her mother, whose own preoccupied gaze is focused in the opposite direction as she pulls the child towards her and holds her hand. The solemnity of the model's expression and the seemingly incongruous mood of festivity suggested by the colorful hats provide a charming tension not unusual in Cassatt's paintings.

Cassatt aligned herself with the group of artists known as the Impressionists and later wrote that this association changed her life: "I admired Manet, Courbet, and Degas. I hated conventional art — I began to live." In particular Degas's linear design and use of black impressed Cassatt. She embraced the French artist's disciplined approach as her own, reinforcing the theme of women and children through strong formal compositions of abstract patterns.

In 1913, just a few years after Cassatt painted *Mother and Daughter*, the Armory Show in New York introduced the American public to European modernism. Several artists, however, had studied the works of Cezanne and Matisse in Paris during the first decade of the twentieth century. Among these was Arthur Dove, whose *The Lobster* is the museum's earliest "modern" picture. Alfred Stieglitz included this picture in a 1910 exhibition at his "291" gallery. This exhibition introduced Dove to the American public and began a lifelong friendship between Dove and Stieglitz, who proved to be one of the artist's strongest supporters.

Dove remained committed to modernism and soon began experiments in abstraction (or as he called it, "extraction"). *Thunder Shower* with its reverberating abstract forms and muted colors evokes the sensations of a storm.

The southwestern United States beckoned artists during the 1920s, and many of them chose to spend the summer months near the flourishing art colonies of Taos and Santa Fe, New Mexico. Stuart Davis

traveled there with John Sloan during the summer of 1923, but found that he had difficulty working in the area. "I did not do much work because the place itself was so interesting," he wrote. "I don't think you could do much work there except in a literal way." Each canvas he painted during his three-month stay challenged him to reorganize his visual field into colored areas of distinct size and shape. Emphasis on heavy outlines and irregular framing devices further reinforced the pictorial qualities Davis valued. *New Mexican Landscape* presents an image as characteristically American as the urban environment the artist preferred.

Marsden Hartley was among the most individual American modernists. His artistic sensibility was formed during an extended stay in Germany just before World War I. Hartley's early career was very promising but the admiration for German military symbolism shown in some of his painting was poorly received when he returned to New York. Hartley's life thereafter was a continual struggle, punctuated with a series of tragedies which he often "painted out" in his strong, expressive palette. *Earth Cooling*, *Mexico* is a scene, atypical for Hartley, whose best-known works are of his native Maine. In this work, the landscape of Mexico seems alive and shows his preference for strong compositional qualities, as well as his passionate approach to subject matter.

Georgia O'Keeffe painted the series *Light Coming on the Plains* while she was teaching at West Texas State Normal School in Canyon. Of West Texas she wrote: "That was my country — terrible winds and a wonderful emptiness." She described the sensations which led to the watercolor series: "The light would begin to appear, and then it would disappear again and then there would be a halo effect, and then it would appear again. The light would come and go for quite a while before it finally came."

Without her permission or even her knowledge, Alfred Stieglitz exhibited O'Keeffe's watercolors in 1916 as his "291" gallery. Although at first O'Keeffe was quite angry, Stieglitz convinced her that the works should be seen. After a one-woman exhibition the following year, she decided to quit her teaching job and move to New York. She married Alfred Stieglitz in 1924.

New Mexico is the area usually associated with O'Keeffe, and she continues to make her home in remote Abiquiu. She first visited New Mexico in 1917 but was unable to return until 1929, when she began to spend every summer there. After Stieglitz's death in 1946 she made Abiquiu her permanent residence.



Parson Weems' Fable (1939), oil, 38 3/8 x 50 1/8" by Grant Wood

Exhibit. . .

She loved the natural shape of the land and the indigenous architecture of the region which resembles these natural forms and echoes the earth's color and material. The apse end of St. Francis of Assisi Mission at Rancho de Taos, in particular, suggests an abstraction of material just slightly manipulated by man, and appealed to O'Keeffe's formal sensibilities, which she applied as well to the church's stark New Mexican setting in *Rancho Church, Taos, New Mexico*, 1930.

Grant Wood was interested in American mythology and set out to paint a series devoted to our national myths. He chose an apocryphal episode from the life of George Washington for his first canvas in this series. In *Parson Weems' Fable* the author, Reverend Mason Locke Weems (whose fifth edition of Washington's biography, *The Life of Washington the Great*, published in 1806, first recorded a story previ-

ously known only in oral history), presents his own story by drawing back a cherry-trimmed drapery to reveal the moment young George Washington confessed to the destruction of his father's cherry tree. The appearance of Gilbert Stuart's famous portrait of Washington on the body of a small boy reinforces the power of popular histories and familiar imagery. Through *Parson Weems' Fable*, Grant Wood enriched a tale that, for many, has grown synonymous with its pictorial representation.

The Amon Carter Museum collection of paintings and sculpture extends in time from about 1800 until 1940, with significant works, such as Stuart Davis's *Blips and Ifs*, dating from the 1960s. Within this time frame are important works of art by major American artists which, taken together, convey the scope and depth of American art from its formative years to its maturity. 🗑️

Carol Clark is the Curator of Paintings at the Amon Carter Museum.

Glimpses of Early Oklahoma

By Sarah Hirsch



Oklahoma in celebrating its 75th anniversary has a well defined image, one of rich oil fields and even richer wheat fields. This image, however, has not been constant. Looking back, the popular view of Oklahoma has changed more often than perhaps any other area in the United States. In the 1930s Oklahoma was known for dark clouds of blowing dust; in the late 1800s its fertile prairies lured thousands of homesteaders to take part in land runs, while only fifty years earlier the territory had been considered suitable only for settlement by displaced Indian tribes.

The region that became known as Oklahoma was made a part of the United States in 1803 with the Louisiana Purchase. It soon became apparent that the southwestern portion of the purchase, Oklahoma included, would maintain its isolation longer than other

Jim Butler, a typical Arkansas River boatman, pencil sketch by William de la Montagne Cary.

Oklahoma. . .

areas. A hostile Spanish government claiming sovereignty over most of Oklahoma prevented boundary exploration by the Americans. In 1806, Zebulon Pike, who was captured by the Spanish while attempting to chart the region, reported that the Southwest was an uninhabitable arid waste.

Not until 1819 did others write at length concerning Oklahoma. From that time forward the journals of these men, who for a multitude of reasons traveled through an unknown land, provide an often varying description of Oklahoma.

Stephen H. Long, commanding a government expedition to trace the courses of the Arkansas and Red Rivers, was the first to label the entire Plains region as the "Great American Desert." Edwin James, a geologist who accompanied Long, was also convinced that western Oklahoma was unsuitable for settlement:

"We have little apprehension of giving too unfavourable an account of this portion of the country. Though the soil is in some places fertile, the want of timber, of navigable streams, and of water for the necessities of life, render it an unfit residence for any but a nomade population. The traveller who shall at any time have traversed its desolate sands, will, we think, join us in the wish that this region may for ever remain the unmolested haunt of the native hunter, the bison, and the jackall."

The world famous English naturalist, Thomas Nuttall also visited Oklahoma in 1819. His description of the area near present-day Muskogee differs greatly from Long's dismissal of the entire area:

"This morning I walked over a portion of the alluvial land of the Verdigris, the fertility of which was sufficiently obvious in the disagreeable and smothering luxuriance of the tall weed, with which it was overrun. The neck of land, situated betwixt Grand river and the Verdigris, is about two miles wide, free from inundation, and covered with larger trees than any other I had seen since leaving Port Smith. Among them were lofty scarlet oaks, ash and hackberry, and whole acres of nettles. . . . Contiguous to the lower side of Grand river, there was a thick cane-brake, more than two miles in width, backed by the prairie, without the intervention of hills. As is common in



Map from the expedition led by Major Stephen H. Long, published in 1822.

large alluvions, so in this of the Verdigris, a second terrace of more elevated bottom succeeds the first, beyond which, occur thinly timbered hills. I then entered upon the great western prairies, or grassy plains, separated from each other by small rivulets, exhibiting belts of trees along their margin. About eight miles from the Arkansa, commences the great Osage prairie, more than 60 miles in length, and, in fact, succeeded by a continuation of woodless plains to the banks of the Missouri.

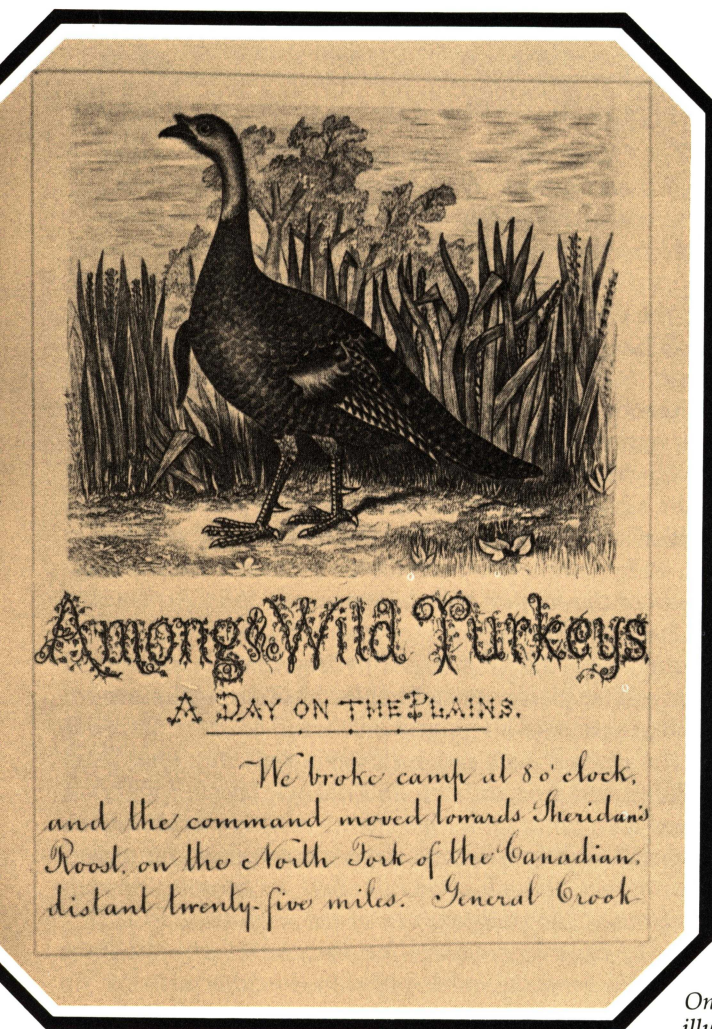
"I visited the rapids of the Verdigris, which are situated five miles above its embouchure. . . . If the confluence of the Verdigris, Arkansa, and Grand rivers, shall ever become of importance as a settlement, which the great and irresistible tide of emigration promises, a town will probably be founded here, at the junction of these streams; and this obstruction in the navigation of the Verdigris, as well as the rapids of the Grand river, will afford good and convenient

situations for mills, a matter of no small importance in the list of civilized comforts."

Josiah Gregg also predicted the future settlement of the Plains. As a merchant taking part in the Santa Fe trade, Gregg crossed Oklahoma four times between 1831 and 1840. His fourth trip established a new route along the Canadian River. Soon after returning to the East, he published *Commerce of the Prairies* from his travel notes. From this work yet another aspect of early Oklahoma is portrayed:

"The landscape is beautifully variegated with stripes and fringes of timber: while the little herds of buffalo that were scattered about in fantastic groups imparted a degree of life and picturesqueness to the scene, which it was truly delightful to contemplate.

"It was three days previous that we had first met with these prairie cattle. I have often heard backwoodsmen speak of the buck ague, but commended me to the buffalo fever of the prairies for novelty and amusement. Very few of our party had ever seen a buffalo before in its wild state; therefore at the first sight of these noble animals the excitement surpassed anything I had ever witnessed before. Some of our dragoons in their eagerness for sport had managed to frighten away a small herd that were quietly feeding at some distance, before our still hunters, who had crawled towards them, had been able to get within the rifle-shot of them. No sooner were the movements of our mounted men perceived than the whole extent of country, as far as the eye could reach, became perfectly animate with living objects, fleeing and scampering in every direction. From the surrounding valleys sprang up numerous herds of these animals which in their indiscriminate flight passed so near the wagons that the drivers, carried away by the contagious excitement of the movement, would leave the teams and keep up a running fire after them. I had the good fortune to witness the exploits of one of our northern greenhorns who, mounted upon a sluggish mule and without any kind of weapon, amused himself by chasing every buffalo that came scudding along, as if he expected to capture him by laying hold of his tail. Plying spur and whip, he would gallop after one division till he was left far behind, and then turn to another and another, with the same earnestness of purpose, until they had all passed out of sight. He finally came back disheartened and sullen, with his head hanging down like one conscious of having done something supremely ridiculous; but still cursing his lazy mule, which, he said, might have caught the buf-



One of the pages of *To The Canadian River* written and illustrated by William Strong in 1878.

Oklahoma. . .

falo, if it had had a mind to."

In 1834, artist George Catlin accompanied an expedition of United States Dragoons to the southern Oklahoma Plains on a mission to promote friendship with the Comanche Indians. Catlin pronounced the Comanches to be the "most extraordinary horsemen that I have seen . . . and I doubt whether any people in the world can surpass them."

Catlin found the Comanche method of capturing and taming wild horses of great interest:

"The usual mode of taking the wild horses, is, by throwing the lasso, whilst pursuing them at full speed, and dropping a noose over their necks, by which their speed is soon checked, and they are 'choked down'. . . .

"The Indian, when he starts for a wild horse, mounts one of the fleetest he can get, and coiling his lasso on his arm starts off, under the 'full whip' till he can enter the band, when he soon gets it over the neck of one of the number; when he instantly dismounts, leaving his own horse, and runs as fast as he can, letting the lasso pass out gradually and carefully through his hands, until the horse falls for want of breath, and lies helpless on the ground, at which time the Indian advances slowly towards the horse's head, keeping the lasso tight upon its neck, until he fastens a pair of hobbles on the animal's two fore feet, and

also loosens the lasso and gives it a noose around the jaw, by which he gets great power over the affrighted animal, which is rearing and plunging when it gets breath; and by which, as he advances, hand over hand, towards the horse's nose he is able to hold it down and prevent it from throwing itself over on its back, at the hazard of its limbs. By this means he gradually advances, until he is able to place his hand on the animal's nose, and over its eyes; and at length to breathe in its nostrils, when it soon becomes docile and conquered; so that he has little else to do than to remove the hobbles from its feet, and lead or ride it into camp."

Not only Indian customs, but the Indians themselves were of constant interest to travelers. Washington Irving, one of the best known writers to visit the area, included in his journal a description of the Osages:

"The Osage [are] stately fellows; stern and simple in garb and aspect. They wore no ornaments; their dress consisted merely of blankets, leathern leggins, and moccasins. Their heads were bare; their hair was cropped close, excepting a bristling ridge on the top, like the crest of a helmet, with a long scalp lock hanging behind. They had fine Roman countenances, and broad deep chests; and, as they generally wore their blankets wrapped round their loins, so as to leave the bust and arms bare, they looked like so many noble bronze figures. The Osage are the finest looking Indians I have ever seen in the west. They have not yielded sufficiently, as yet to the influence of civilization to lay by their simple Indian garb or to lose the habits of the hunter and the warrior."

Charles Latrobe, who accompanied the same group of rangers as did Washington Irving, also wrote of the Osage. The picture presented by Latrobe while less noble, is perhaps more realistic:

"The warrior was generally seen marching first, with his firm straight step and upright bearing, burdened with nothing but his rifle. . . . In general they were tall, and in a certain degree martial in gait and bearing; yet, though straightlimbed, to spare to be handsome. The countenance of the squaws, on the contrary, after true savage fashion, were bent toward the earth, from the burden of skins or other articles imposed upon their shoulders, and secured in its posi-



Buffalo Bull, watercolor by George Catlin.



Three Osage Warriors – T'chong-tas-sab-hee, Tal-lee and Ko-ha-tunk-a.
Watercolor by George Catlin.

tion by a strap of leather over the temples. The Indian ponies had also their burden of baskets and utensils. . . .

"The moment the Indian proclaimed a halt to his family, he drew to one side – grounded his rifle – twisted his blanket closer over his attenuated person, and looked on with listlessness and apathy at the labours of the squaws, who meanwhile were busily employed in bending the twigs of the underwood into a skeleton hut – covering them with mats and skins – making their fires and cooking. In every thing they seem drudges of the males."

By the 1850s a great deal of change had occurred in Oklahoma. The Five Civilized Tribes had been removed to Indian Territory and emigrants traveling to the gold fields of California populated the once isolated southern Plains. Stationed in the Choctaw Nation, Captain Randolph Marcy led survey missions, commanded military escorts for emigrants and soon became a principal authority concerning western Indian tribes:

"There are two villages here [near Rush Creek] occupied by the Wichitas and Wacos respectively; they are situated in the rich fertile valley of the creek, where they have cultivated corn, pumpkins, beans,

peas, and melons. These people have no ploughs, or other agricultural implements, but a small hoe, with which they prepare the ground for the reception of the seed, and do all other necessary work in its cultivation yet the prolific soil gives them bountiful returns. . . .

"The village of the Wichitas has forty-two lodges, each containing two families of about ten persons. These lodges are made by erecting a frame-work of poles placed in a circle in the ground, with the tops united in an oval form, and bound together with numerous withes or wattles, the whole nicely thatched with grass; and when completed, it makes a very commodious and comfortable domicil. The interior arrangements are such, that every person has a bunk, raised from the ground and covered with buffalo-hides, forming a couch which is far from being uncomfortable. When seated around their fires in the centre of the lodges, they have an air of domestic happiness about them which I did not expect to find. . . .

"The lodges are about twenty-five feet in diameter at the base, twenty feet high, and in the distance have very much the appearance of a group of hay-stacks. With the exception of a few families that live upon the Canadian, the whole Wichita nation is concentrated

Oklahoma. . .

Village of the Pawnee Picts, oil by George Catlin. Pawnee Picts were later known as Wichita Indians.





Catching the Wild Horses, oil by George Catlin.

at this place; their numbers do not exceed five hundred souls.

"The Wacos live about a mile above the Wichitas, in a village constructed precisely like the other. There are twenty lodges in this village, and about two hundred souls. Their habits and customs are similar to the Wichitas, with whom they frequently intermarry, and are upon the best and most friendly terms."

In 1878, a hunting party was organized by General Philip Sheridan. The group included Generals George Crook and A. W. Whipple as well as William Strong, who became the journalist for the expedition into Indian Territory:

"Camp No. 3

Near North Fork of Canadian

February 9th

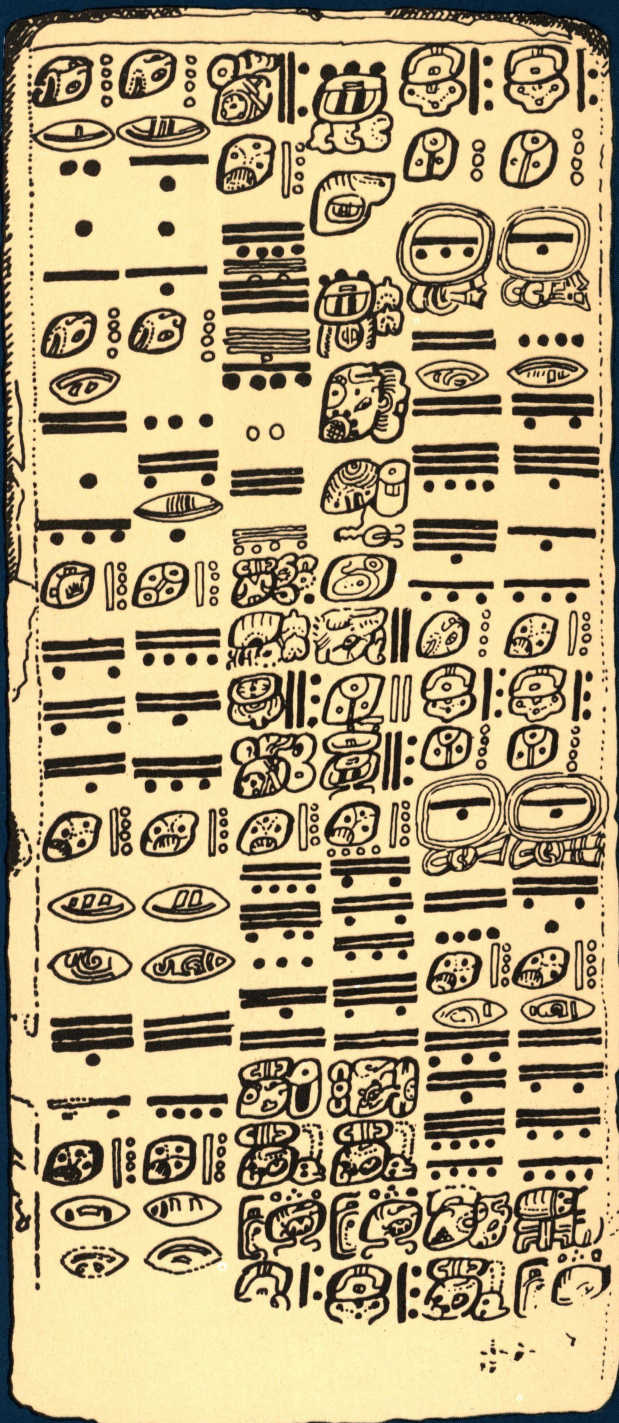
"Breakfast this morning at 7 o'clock, and an hour later moved out of camp No. 2, en route for the North Fork. Marched fifteen miles, camping at 2 P.M. on a small creek, a tributary of the North Fork. It has been a cold, stormy, disagreeable day. I have suffered very much from my injured eye and rode in the ambulance from our last camp. Genl. Crook went hunting alone this morning coming in at 6 o'clock with eight splendid turkeys. He cornered a large drove in a cañon, and

fired several shots right and left. . . .

"I was beginning to fear we would find no other turkeys [near Sheridan's Roost] when, upon turning a sharp bend in the stream, and within two hundred yards, I saw an immense drove of turkeys, – two hundred and fifty or three hundred, I should think. . . . It was an exciting scene, and it is not at all likely I shall ever look upon another like it. . . . I fired with great rapidity, selecting a fresh bird at each shot. . . . Nearly every one at which I shot, went down."

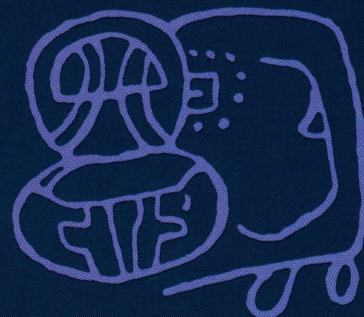
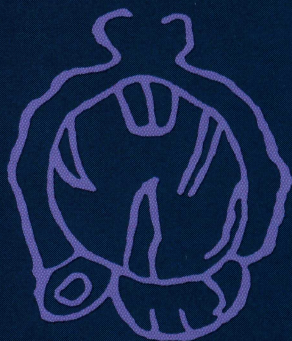
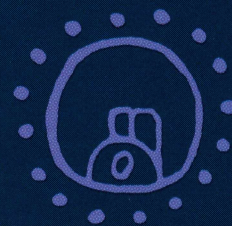
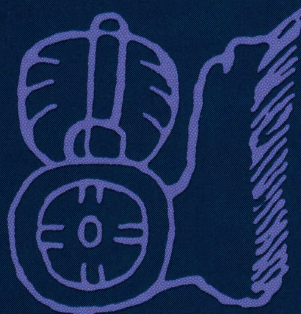
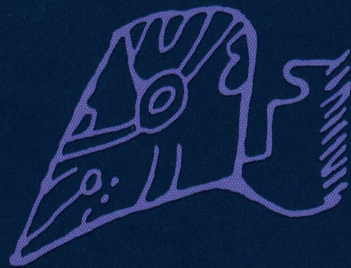
The same decade of General Sheridan's turkey hunt saw the establishment of railroads in Indian Territory. The coming of the railway gave new opportunity to industry in the territory, as well as to those seeking to open it to homesteaders. The events of the sequence are closely related — the supporters of the railroad joined others working to open the territory and in 1889 the first of the Oklahoma land runs was held; these homesteaders immediately began to work toward statehood. By 1907, Oklahoma had grown beyond the predictions of all who had traveled within its boundaries less than a hundred years earlier. 🏠

Sarah Hirsch is the librarian on staff at Gilcrease Museum.



An example of a Mayan calendar taken from Tres Codices.

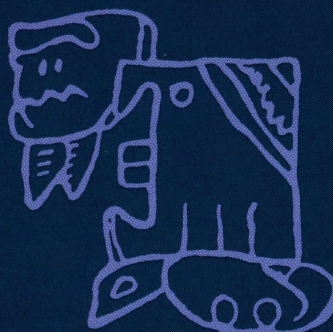
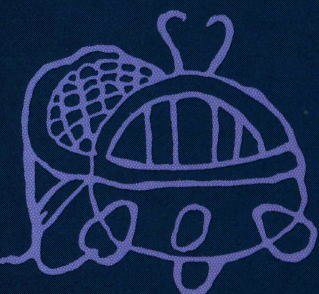
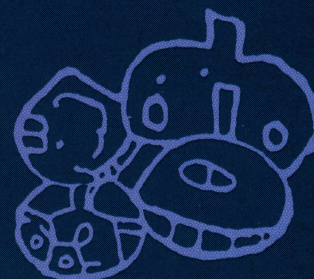
From Tres Codices, Mayan symbols for months.

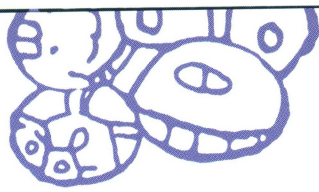


YOUR SIGN?

By Michelle Starr

This month has 19 days. The moon, from when it rises until it sets, 30 days. The day has 8 hours and the night 16 hours. On the 11th day the sun-sign begins to reign from the shins of the leg to the trunk of the body and everything below. During this sign one ought not to take medicine, though bloodletting is okay if necessary. Also it is a good time for bathing, swimming, and satisfying one's appetite for food. The men born in the days in which this sign reigns are small and always sad, but are very attractive to women. In their meals they use a great deal of chile which is quite notable. In the days of the full moon raisins can be gathered if they have already begun to ripen. It is also a good time to transplant roots and plant trees. In the days of this month per-



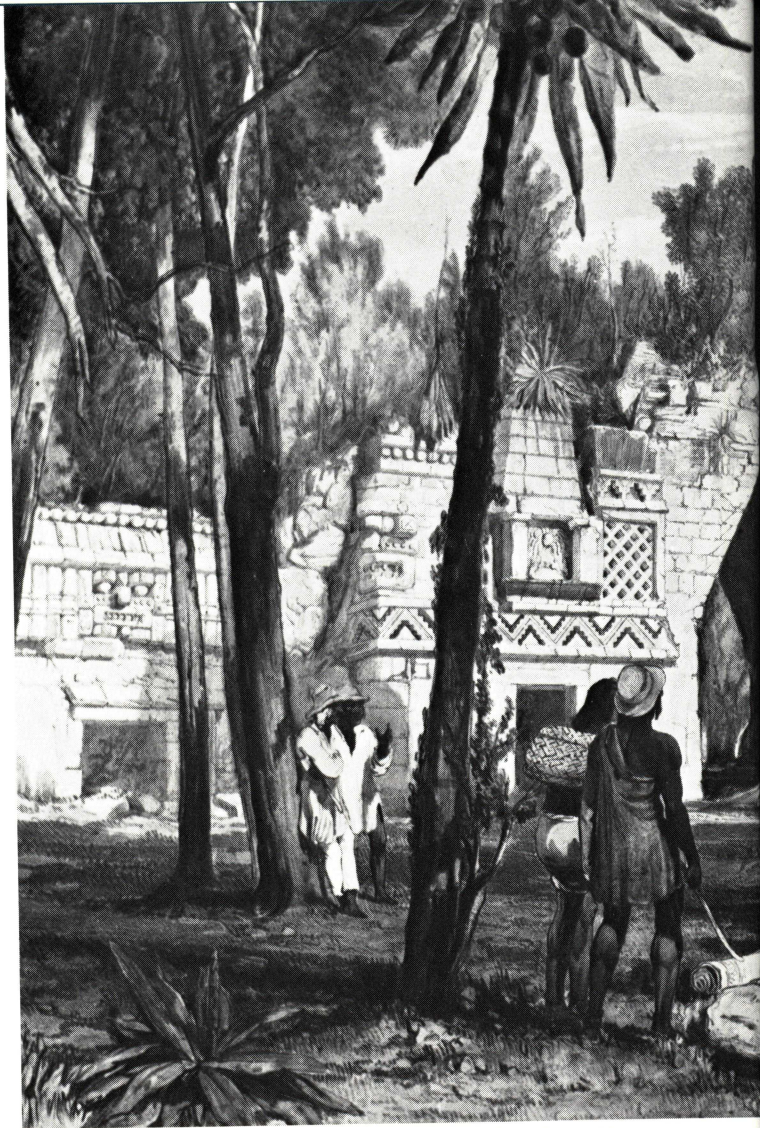


Sign. . .

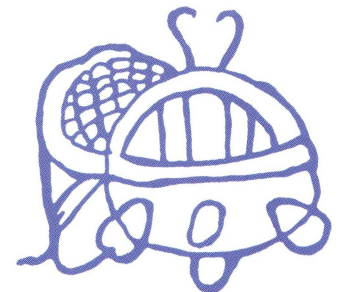
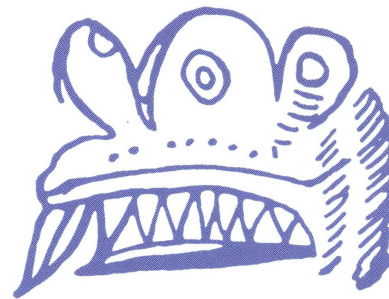
sons will not suffer thirst. During meals they will feel fine if no water is placed on the table. Males which are born in this month will live 58 years, unless of course they cut short their time by sinning with women during the hour of the lunar conjunction. If they are female they will live 56 years. They will have two illnesses; the first, at the age of 34 and the second, at the age of 37. The individual who is born in the hours in which this sign reigns will die by suffocation, by falling into a reservoir, or a pond, or choking while drinking. If this is your sign, look at it here."

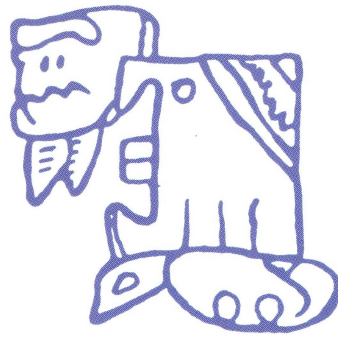
Sounds familiar doesn't it, like something you would read in the newspaper or at the supermarket checkout counter? But what month has only 19 days? According to the Mayans, the month of YAAX (January 12 to February 1) did. What you have just read is part of a horoscope; a selection from a collection of Mayan calendars (which divided the year into 18 months), almanacs, and horoscopes which constitutes the *Perez Codex*, "a free translation from the Mayan to the Castilian" by Dr. Ermilo Solis Alcala . . . from a firsthand copy by Juan Pio Perez of old Mayan manuscripts which he found in the town of Mani. Don Perez designated the manuscripts "The Book of Chilam Balam De Mani." Until 1949, the partial contents of the *Perez Codex* could be seen only in John L. Stephens's *Incidents of Travel In Yucatan*, published in 1842; *Disertacion Sobre La Historia Maya O Yucatan*, by Crescencio Carrillo y Ancona, published in 1870; and in the University of Pennsylvania library, the National Library of Mexico, the Museum of Yucatan Archeology, and the National Museum of Mexican Anthropology. In 1949 the *Perez Codex* was published by The Social Action League of Mexico and is now part of the rare books collection at Gilcrease Museum.

While the Mayan horoscope takes the same general form as those with which you may be familiar, their pre-Columbian concerns were understandably different from ours. For example, do you ever worry about when to take a purge or let blood? The Mayans did. ZAAC (February) "will be a good time to take purges, but bloodletting is dangerous." MAC (March), however, "is not a good time for purges, but is good for bloodletting." And blood was let from different areas of the body at different times of the year. In POOP



These ruins stand as tribute to a knowledge of mathematics and engineering that remains from Catherwood's Views in Central America Chiapas and Yucatan.





ous, respectful, healthy, diligent, loves everyone, and will have friendship with good people," while TZEEC (October) babies "will be talkers and will not know when to shut up. They are lost when they think about a good woman."

The Mayans were quite specific about such things as health and longevity. "Men born this month, XUUL (November), will live 67 years and women 47; they will have three infirmities; the first at age 7, the second at age 18, and the third at age 28."

To the Mayans, the quality of life was as important as its length, as evidenced by how specific the Mayan astrologers were with life prophecies. MOAN'S (April's) children "will suffer a great deal of bad luck, will be the cause of their own misfortune, and will find themselves in the hands of the law." Those born in UOO (August) "will dissipate their wealth making a show of their proud ancestry." And "those born at this time DZEYAXKIN (November) will not suffer from work. They will be powerful and of bad temper."

As agricultural people, the Mayans were naturally concerned about when to plant and when to harvest. ZAAC (February) was a good time "to harvest raisins and plant or transplant such things as pine cones. It is a good time to clean beehives and plant all kinds of trees." In MOAN (April) "those who have domestic birds ought to hide the eggs this month to ensure beautiful offspring and not just more broken eggs." ZIIP (August) was "a good time to plant onions."

And what would a horoscope be without warnings? The Mayans proscribed against all manner of things at different times — from foods to avoid, to bad days for baths. The warning repeated most often in the horoscope is the one against "carnal pleasures during the hour of the lunar conjunction." Those choosing to ignore this injunction risked a "shortened life, large tumors on the side of the person's bowels, stomachaches, bad hearts, and bone aches." But perhaps the oddest warning, and one certainly not to be found in today's papers or magazines is a short cryptic statement attached to the reading for the month of YAAX (January): "Avoid iguana crossings!" 🐸

Michelle Starr is the Education Coordinator at Gilcrease Museum.

(July), "any bloodletting should be done in the middle of the head, but only by those who know what they're doing. *If not, nothing should be done, or bad will come of it.*" In ZOODZ (September), "bloodletting is to be done from the armpits," while in XUUL (October), "bloodletting should be done on the side of the bone that sounds hollow," in DZEYAXKIN (November), "in the two little fingers," and in MOOL (December), "beneath the ankles."

The Mayans evidently relied on the horoscope to determine, in so far as was possible, the best month to have their children. Each month contains the physical characteristics of a child born at that time. Children born in CUMKU (June) "will have beautiful bodies." Those born in POOP (July) "will have a wide front and little hair." A CHE (February) baby will "have beautiful skin and black hair."

No less important were mental characteristics or personality traits. ZIIP'S (September's) child is "virtu-

PEOPLE AND PERSONALITIES



Board member Priscilla C. Cotton (right) with Dr. Jane Evans, president of Mt. Vernon College, a recent visitor.



Gillie awards ceremony featured a skit of the marriage of Mr. Oklahoma and Indian Territory. Participants left to right, Steve Devore, Mary Carolyn Hoag, June Mustari, Fred A. Myers and Karl Janssen.



Mary Ann Burdett, outgoing Gillie president (right) is presented with a reminder of her achievements by Rosalie Summers, newly elected president Valerie Gwyn and Norma Mitchell.



The Board of Trustees of the Cody Museum visited Gilcrease Museum on April 19th.

Arts and Humanities Council director, John Everett, spoke to Leadership Tulsa recently.

BOOK REVIEWS

By Mildred D. Ladner

For those of us who are unable to visit all of the fine collections of American art, a book such as Harrison Eiteljorg's *Treasures of the American West* (Independent Publishers' Group, \$40) is a welcome find.

Eiteljorg, who shares his collection with the Indianapolis Museum of Art, divides his book into three sections dealing with Artists of the Old West, Artists of New Mexico and Contemporary Western Artists.

Many of the artists familiar to Gilcrease supporters are represented in the opening section, which includes work by Russell, Remington, Moran, Farny, Bierstadt, Seltzer, Sharp and Stanley. The Taos Ten and the transplanted Russians, Fechin and Gaspard, are in the middle section. Perhaps the most refreshing part is the closing section, since contemporary artists have been included less often in western art books. Among those whose paintings and sculptures are included are Olaf Wieghorst (soon to be exhibited at Gilcrease), John F. Clymer, Nick Eggenhoffer, George Carlson, Harry Jackson, Charlie Dye, James Reynolds, Robert Schriver, Brownell McGrew, Clark Hulings and former Tulsa resident Bettina Steinke.

Patricia Janis Broder wrote the introduction to this delightfully informal book, which leaves the impression that the reader is being guided personally through the Eiteljorg collection by its owner.



Although each of the thirty-four articles from the first ten years of the *Smithsonian* magazine's existence chosen for inclusion in *The Best of the Smithsonian* (Smithsonian Exposition Books/Harmony, \$27.50), is worthy, two articles alone will make the book indispensable for those who know and love Gilcrease.

"The Peale Family: A Lively Mixture of Art and Science" is followed directly by



In "The Plasterer," Ernest L. Blumenschein, perhaps the best-known of the Taos Society of Artists (which later, with additions, came to be known as the Taos Ten), captures a portrait of his own adobe worker who was a Spanish-American captured by the Indians and who later either escaped or was sold. Harrison Eiteljorg regards this painting as one of Blumenschein's masterpieces and one of his own favorites. From *TREASURES OF THE AMERICAN WEST, SELECTIONS FROM THE COLLECTION OF HARRISON EITELJORG*. © 1981.

"A Great Painter, A Royal Naturalist on Wild Missouri," the latter the story of Plains Indian life, customs and combat as recorded by Prince Maximilian and Karl Bodmer.



A different kind of book about Native American life is Theodore L. Kazimiroff's *The Last Algonquin* (Walker and Co., \$12.95), a "hand-me-down" account of his

father's encounter, in 1925, with Joe Two Trees, last surviving member of the Algonquin tribe's Turtle Clan, who was existing on an island in New York's Pelham Bay exactly as his people had lived for centuries.

Knowing death to be near, the aging Indian revealed his existence to a sensitive twelve-year-old, who would become a respected amateur archaeologist and collector of some 250,000 Indian artifacts.



In *The Desert Smells Like Rain* (North Point Press, \$12.50), ethnobotanist and naturalist Gary Paul Nabhan recounts his experiences among the Papago Indians of southern Arizona and Sonora, Mexico. He draws on his mastery of the tribe's language to provide an insider's view of a remote culture.



The University of Oklahoma Press, noted for its Indian and western history books, has released four recent contributions to the mounting documentation of western development:

Clifford E. Trafzer, assistant professor of history and Native American studies at Washington State University, is the author of *The Kit Carson Campaign* (\$14.95), and Jerome Greene, research historian for the National Park Service in Denver, has recorded an episode in the Great Sioux War in *Slim Buttes, 1876*.

Robert K. DeArment, who writes about the every day existence of western settlers, now tackles the saga of frontier gamblers in *Knights of the Green Cloth* (\$17.95). Michael L. Lawson's *Dammed Indians* (\$19.95), relates the Pick-Sloan plan to restructure the Missouri River, considered by him to be the "single most destructive act ever perpetrated against an Indian tribe" by the United States. Vine Deloria, Jr. has written the foreword.

Rendezvous Revisited

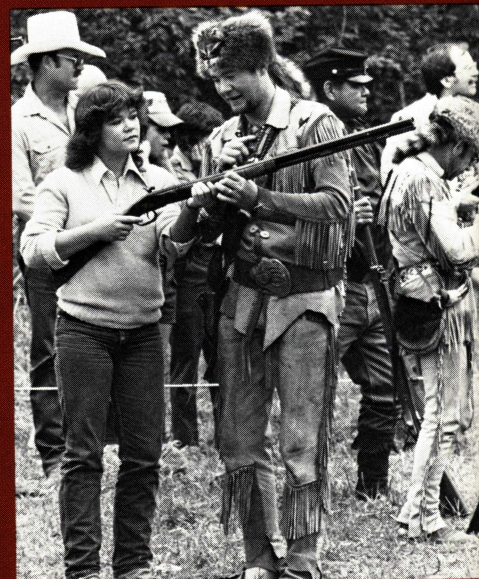


The Fourth Annual Gilcrease Rendezvous, held May 1st and 2nd, offered a variety of activities to the public ranging from an auction of works by artist Eric Sloane and sculptor Glenna Goodacre to Indian dances, muzzle loading demonstrations, and musical entertainment.



Mr. and Mrs. Barton Gilcrease with Robert F. Biolchini, of the Board of Directors, at the Sloane-Goodacre auction, April 30th.

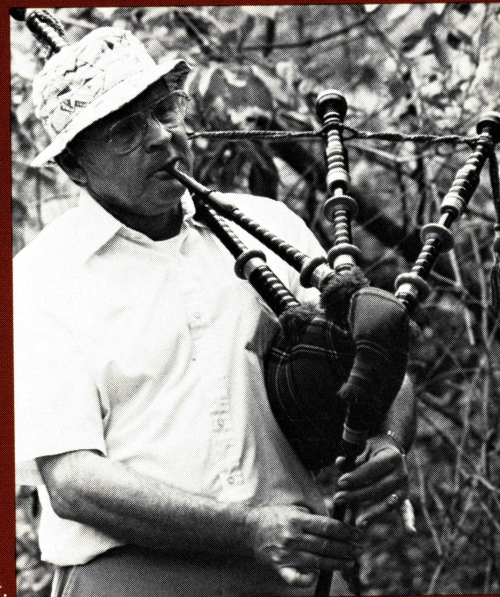
Senior curator, Dan McPike entertains the crowds at Rendezvous with his special talent.



A muzzle loader explains how his rifle works.



Fiddle player with the Family Reunion Band





Richard Barber (left) presents honorary awards to Glenna Goodacre and Eric Sloane



Rope artist was exhibiting his talent.



Sculptor Glenna Goodacre (center) discussing one of her works as her husband looks on.

Gena Gilcrease Gallery Dedicated

The Gena Gilcrease Gallery officially opened in May with an exhibit of works by National Academy painter Eric Sloane and sculptor Glenna Goodacre. The new wing of Gilcrease Museum was inaugurated at a dedication ceremony on May 1st. Lindsay L. Alexander, Emeritus member of the Board of Directors, presided over the ceremonies. Joan Stauffer, president of the Gilcrease Museum Association, presented the museum with a portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Barton Gilcrease. It was commissioned from Tulsa artist Glen Godsey, on the faculty at the University of Tulsa. Gene Gilcrease also presented two colored photograph portraits to the museum. One is a portrait of his father, Tom Gilcrease, Jr. and the other of Barton Gilcrease. David R. Milsten, Emeritus Board member, gave the closing summation. Also attending the dedication ceremonies were eighteen

members of the Gilcrease family; architects Charles Ward and David Marsee of the firm of Ward and Marsee; the general contractor, Tom Graham of the Graham Company and members of the Board of Directors of the Gilcrease Museum Association. Robert J. Riggs, Jr., Chairman of the Board of Trustees, represented the City of Tulsa.

The new wing was funded by the City of Tulsa and is intended to be a flexible space for housing a variety of temporary materials borrowed from other museum collections as well as exhibits organized from the Gilcrease collection. This expansion also unifies the East and main facade of the building and allows for easy access to the galleries for the handicapped.



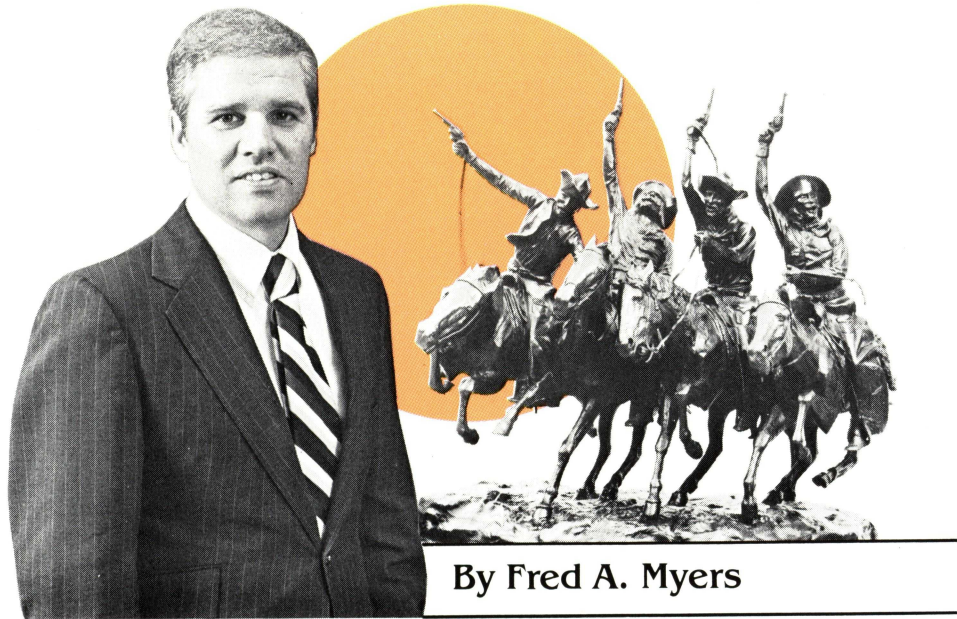
Barton Gilcrease (center) with Mr. and Mrs. David R. Milsten.



Three generations of Gilcreases attended the gallery dedication.



Present at the Gena Gilcrease Gallery dedication were, left to right, Charles E. Thornton, Gilcrease Museum Association president, Jack Zarrow and Mr. and Mrs. Barton Gilcrease.



By Fred A. Myers

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

A question that dogs the footsteps of most museum workers — I might say all museum workers except the gardeners, the docents, the clean up people, and possibly the development person — is: "What goes on at the museum; I mean what do you do out there?"

To the museum worker this is a surprising question, the reflexive answer being a not very illuminating, "I work."

I know that was the answer I gave the first times the dogging question was asked me many years ago when I was a new museum worker. Repetition of the question over the years has convinced me, finally, that there is an understandable puzzlement among those outside a museum as to what goes on inside a museum, and that a more fulsome answer is necessary.

The root of the puzzlement, I have decided, is that the bedrock responsibility of a museum — taking care of the objects — does not ordinarily result in headline making activities. It is a breach of this responsibility, as in theft, that makes headlines. Taking care everyday, every hour, must be done but it doesn't show much.

Nor does research on the objects in the collection, the second bedrock responsibility of a museum. Research shows only in such places as an expanded label, a

footnote in someone else's book, or possibly a catalogue, detailed and, to the outsider, more than a little tedious. But research and study of the collections, parallel to taking care of the collections, are at the core of what museums are all about.

Education is a third basic responsibility; unlike care and research, education usually manifests itself in such visible things as guided tours, lectures, tape cassettes, and video productions. Education often involves groups of people and such groups are visible and audible, and their members talk later at a party or dinner. So education shows.

Occasionally a museum expands its facilities, and this certainly shows. There is dust and disruption, and then, as if by magic, a new space. Buildings don't move or talk, but they are eminently visible and are testimony that somebody has done something. There is a new space at the Gilcrease Museum, the Gena Gilcrease Gallery, dedicated on May 1, a place to house special exhibitions such as the Rendezvous show of works by Eric Sloane, N.A. and Glenna Goodacre and the blockbuster show from the Amon Carter Museum now on view.

In reviewing the year, a number of things in addition to the new gallery float to the surface. Such things as:

- a new flower bed at the entrance to the upper parking lot and another on the south wall of the gift shop.
- a drinking fountain just off the walkway to the main entrance.
- a general increase in the beauty of the grounds.
- remodeling of the kitchen to provide a cook stove and more counter space.
- a new installation of saddles and cowboy art in the old Leigh gallery.
- redoing of the lighting in five of the oldest galleries.
- outfitting of the quonset hut as a temporary conservation laboratory.

Nothing earthshaking, but all real improvements made in the last several months. Who says nothing ever happens at a museum? Most people do and in a sense they are right. Museums are conservative places, institutions that are in business to conserve cultural history. On the other hand, some things do happen, a surprising number of things if you look regularly. 🏠

Remnants of a civilization in some ways more than equal to that of Spain from Catherwood's Views in Central America Chiapas and Yucatan.



Thomas Gilcrease Museum Association
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