

COLLECTION GUIDE

Carl Hall Gallery





On the Edge

PACIFIC NORTHWEST ART FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION

THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST COLLECTION at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art includes paintings, sculptures, and works on paper created by Oregon artists as well as modern and contemporary works from Washington, Idaho, and Montana.

Northwest art has been central to the mission of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art since it was first envisioned in the early 1990s. A long tradition of art instruction at Willamette, beginning in the 1850s and continuing with today's strong departments of art and art history, provides the context for making regional art one of the primary emphases of this university-linked museum.

Selections from the Pacific Northwest collection are exhibited in the Carl Hall Gallery, named for the painter who came to Oregon for basic training during World War II and, following his service in the Pacific, returned to the state he referred to as "Eden again." He taught painting, drawing, and printmaking at Willamette University for thirty-eight years, retiring in 1986.

Although the permanent collection contains some nineteenth-century Oregon art, the Carl Hall Gallery presents Northwest art from the 1930s to the twenty-first century. The title of the installation, *On the Edge: Pacific Northwest Art from the Permanent Collection*, recognizes the edgy, avant-garde nature of these works within their respective periods—as well as the region's location on the edge of the continent.

The Pacific Northwest collection is made up of works purchased with the Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund and also includes donations of individual works from artists as well as collectors, such as Dan and Nancy Schneider. In addition, Mark and Janeth Sponenburgh, Judith Zach, the Bunse family, Frances Price Cook, and Marge Riley have donated their entire collections of Northwest art. Other donors, such as Stephan Soihl and Bill Rhoades, acquire and donate works on an ongoing basis, creating expanding collections within the Hallie Ford Museum of Art's permanent holdings of Northwest art.

The Carl Hall Gallery presents key examples of these purchased and donated works, many in periodic rotation, in six categories:

"Pioneers of Oregon Modernism" includes works by Harry Wentz, C. S. Price, Charles Heaney, Amanda Snyder, Constance Fowler (an art instructor at Willamette in the period 1935–1947), and

the Runquist brothers, Arthur and Albert. Beginning in the 1920s and 1930s, these artists rejected the *plein air* scenic painting that dominated earlier periods in favor of modernist abstraction that often relates to European Fauvist and Expressionist movements.

These tendencies continue in the work of the artists included in the category “Mid-Century Northwest Modernism,” such as William Givler and Louis Bunce, Carl Morris and Kenneth Callahan, and Clifford Gleason and Carl Hall. These artists, along with the sculptor Frederic Littman, continued to experiment with Expressionist abstraction while also exploring aspects of automatist and concrete Surrealism. In the same period, Maude Kerns and Albert Patecky experimented with geometric abstraction.

“Late Twentieth-Century Northwest Modernism” includes works by George Johanson, Jack McLarty, Michele Russo, Harry Widman, and the sculptor Manuel Izquierdo, among others. “The Willamette Valley and Oregon Coast” presents artists who lived exclusively on the coast, including Ruth Dennis Grover and Constance Fowler (a coastal resident in her later years), as well as those who resided in the Willamette Valley but were also inspired by the coast, such as Carl Hall and Nelson Sandgren.

“Contemporary Salem Art” is the section of the Carl Hall Gallery that includes work made in and near Salem by artists ranging from D. E. May and Claudia Cave, to current and recent Willamette University art professors and Salem artists such as Nancy Lindburg and Rob Bibler. Finally, “Contemporary Northwest Art” features new works by artists from throughout the Northwest region and often includes recent acquisitions.

Two factors help unify the diverse work on view in the Carl Hall Gallery. One is the artists’ strong linking of the regional scene—primarily the dramatic natural terrain of the Northwest but at times also introducing Portland, Salem, or Seattle urbanism—with abstract form and color. Time and again, from C. S. Price to Henk Pander or Lucinda Parker, artists have found the dramatic visual world of the Northwest region to be the basis of emotionally rich modern painting.

Another unifying factor is that the artists in this collection link regional art with national and international movements. Cubism (to a degree), Expressionism, Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism, and more recent contemporary modes all find their counterparts and variations in Northwest art. At times, George Johanson references Renaissance or Post-Impressionist painting, while Henk Pander alludes to Dutch painting of the seventeenth century. A premise of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art’s Northwest collection is that Northwest regionalism is neither parochial or in some negative sense “local.” Rather, artists in the Pacific Northwest combine regional engagement with a sophisticated awareness of widely practiced modes to create art that is unique to the region yet engaged in artistic dialogue that spans space and time.

ROGER HULL

*Professor Emeritus of Art History, Willamette University
and
Senior Faculty Curator, Hallie Ford Museum of Art*



Clayton Sumner Price
(American, 1874–1950)

The Dark River

1938
Oil on canvas
27.75 x 29.75 in.
Gift of Marge Riley, 2008.021.001

The Dark River is a major work by Oregon's pioneering modern painter, C. S. Price, who arrived in Portland from the Bay Area in 1929. The freely painted mountain masses, barren tree trunk on the river bank, and mottled blue of the seemingly cold and deep water—in a palette ranging from pink and lavender to blue black and green—creates an expressive scene of isolation and grandeur. This work is one of nearly fifty paintings, sculptures, and prints that the Portland collector Marge Riley donated to the Hallie Ford Museum of Art in 2007.



Constance Fowler
(American, 1907–1996)

Beach Cliff

1932
Oil on Masonite
26 x 30 in.
Gift of the Family of Connie Fowler, 2002.027

Constance Fowler was a painter, printmaker, author, and educator during a career that spanned more than sixty years. She taught art at Willamette University from 1935 until 1947. Fowler is best known for the expressive realism of her wood engravings and oil paintings produced in the 1930s and 1940s. Robert Tyler Davis, director of the Portland Art Museum, included her in the exhibition *Oregon Artists* at the San Francisco Museum of Art in 1943 with William Givler, Charles Heaney, David McCosh, Carl Morris, C. S. Price, Albert Runquist, Andrew Vincent, and Charles Voorhies. Like them, Fowler is recognized as an artist who expressed the mood and poetry of the Northwest.



Amanda Snyder
(American, 1894–1980)

Self-Portrait

1948
Oil on Masonite
21.75 x 17.5 in.
Gift of Eugene Snyder, SNY97.01

A student at Portland's Museum Art School, Amanda Snyder was interested in the work of C. S. Price, Charles Heaney, and the French artist Georges Rouault, and developed a distinctive range that included abstract animal studies (often of birds), paintings of structures, and totally nonrepresentational works. Her self-portrait, painted when she was about fifty-four and well-established as a regional artist, is a frank self-assessment of her appearance and perhaps her state of mind in her middle age. It was exhibited in 1964 at the Portland Art Museum in the exhibition *Amanda Snyder, Paintings and Collages*.



Charles Heaney
(American, 1897–1981)

Town of Madras

1954
Oil and charcoal on composition board
15 x 31 in.
Gift of Mildred Hiland, 2009.028

Charles Heaney was born in Wisconsin and moved to Portland with his mother and sister in 1913. A working-class youth, he studied part-time at the Museum Art School with Harry Wentz, who encouraged his students to depict regional subject matter by means of modernist abstraction and expressive color. Although Heaney lived in Portland and often painted the vernacular structures of his neighborhood or demolition sites in the urban core, he also took road trips to central and eastern Oregon and Nevada nearly every year, making drawings and taking photographs of the endless highways and isolated towns such as Madras. These renderings are less documentary than poetic and meditative—based on drawings but also on his memory and imagination as a traveler passing through, observing but not settling. The Hallie Ford Museum of Art presented a retrospective exhibition of Heaney's work in 2005.



William Givler
(American, 1908–2000)

Driftage

1949
Oil on canvas
25.5 x 35.5 in.
Partial gift of Elaine Bernat and Roger Saydack / Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund, SAY99.01

William Givler, a painter and printmaker, was an instructor at the Museum Art School in Portland beginning in 1931 and dean of the school from 1944 until 1973. *Driftage*, one of his most important paintings, was exhibited in the Oregon Annual for 1949 at the Portland Art Museum; the Oregon Centennial Exhibition of 1959 at the Portland Art Museum; and the exhibition *Art of the Pacific Northwest*, presented in 1974 at the Smithsonian Institution, the Seattle Art Museum, and the Portland Art Museum.

The first owner of *Driftage* was Stewart H. Holbrook, the Oregon author, who wrote in the *Sunday Oregonian Magazine* (January 8, 1950): “I never saw, in life, a beach like that portrayed in ‘Driftage,’ nor a sky, nor a woman. Yet the total effect was little short of a blow—a scene of a brooding, sinister sky, of winds wild beyond knowing, of chaotic flotsam come to shore, of the figure of a girl who might well have been a witch of the storm, or some siren of the reefs—a scene both foreboding and beautiful, filled with the savage movement of unseen forces, with disturbing forms and colors.”



Louis Bunce
(American, 1907–1983)

Journey

1960
Oil on paper mounted on Masonite
40 x 26 in.
Gift of Phyllis and George Johanson, 2008.014

Louis Bunce, a legend in Oregon modern art, was born in Lander, Wyoming. In the 1920s, he studied at the Museum Art School in Portland and then at the Art Students League of New York. In 1937, he came to Salem to teach at the WPA art center. In 1949, Bunce and his wife Ida opened the Kharouba Gallery, Portland's first gallery devoted to experimental modern art, which operated until 1955. A printmaker as well as a painter, Bunce influenced many artists in the Pacific Northwest, including those who studied with him at the Museum Art School, where he taught from 1946 to 1972.

Bunce created a body of work that resonates with international modernism. He is known for variations on Surrealism in the 1930s and 1940s, nature-based adaptations of Abstract Expressionism in the 1950s and 1960s, and geometric compositions related to Minimalism in the 1970s. Bunce told his friend George Johanson that *Journey* was inspired by the terrain and highway along the Oregon coast and the rounded forms of mid-century American automobiles.



Manuel Izquierdo
(American, born Spain, 1925–2009)

Cleopatra

1982
Welded sheet bronze
23 x 16 x 30 in.
The Bill Rhoades Collection, a gift in memory of Murna
and Vay Rhoades, 2008.023.020

Manuel Izquierdo, who arrived in Portland in 1942 as a teenaged refugee from wartime Europe, established himself as a leading Oregon sculptor and printmaker in a career spanning six decades. Particularly noted for his welded metal forms, he also created sculpture in cast metal, wood, stone, and ceramic. As a printmaker, he specialized in woodcuts.

Izquierdo was born in a working-class barrio in Madrid, the oldest of three children of an artisan family. During World War II, with the support of the American Friends Service Committee, he and his siblings immigrated to Portland. Izquierdo enrolled at the Museum Art School, where he studied sculpture with Frederic Littman and printmaking with William Givler and Louis Bunce. He completed the program at the school in 1951 and took a teaching position there. He retired in 1997 after forty-six years on the faculty. *Cleopatra* is one of many works of Northwest art that Bill Rhoades of Madras has donated to the Hallie Ford Museum of Art in memory of his parents.



George Johanson
(American, born 1928)

Black Cat—Mountain

1982
Oil and acrylic on canvas
68 x 44 in.
Partial gift of the artist / Maribeth Collins Art
Acquisition Fund, 2003.007

George Johanson painted this work in response to the 1980 eruption of Mount Saint Helens. The fiery palette, flickering light, airborne cat and streamer, funnels of smoke from the cigarette and the volcano, and precariously balanced eggs on the window ledge all suggest a delicate balance between nature and civilization. Johanson was born in Seattle and at the age of seventeen enrolled in the Museum Art School in Portland. He later taught painting and printmaking at the school. The Hallie Ford Museum of Art presented a retrospective exhibition of Johanson's work in 2007.



Jack McLarty
(American, 1919–2011)

Giant in Trouble

1982
Acrylic on canvas
49.25 x 37.25 in.
Gift of Jack and Barbara McLarty, MCL 97.016

Jack McLarty was born in Seattle but grew up in downtown Portland, living in and helping his parents operate a succession of small, working-class hotels. At eighteen he enrolled in classes at the Museum Art School but quit because of the sophistication of the classes and students. One of his instructors, Clara Jane Stephens, encouraged him to return. Three years later, in 1940, McLarty went to New York where he studied with Sol Wilson at the American Artists School, Anton Refregier (the noted muralist), and Joe Solman. He returned to Portland in 1942 and a few years later joined the faculty of the Museum Art School. In 1961, he and his wife Barbara opened the Image Gallery in Portland.

Jack McLarty's fantastic and surreal paintings are often idiosyncratic observations on the dilemmas of modern culture. *Giant in Trouble* shows a recurring figure in McLarty's art—a bloated giant seemingly bent on destruction. The giant is bombarded by an acrobat, whimsical helicopters and airplanes, and animals suggestive of the pottery that the McLartys collected during their trips to Mexico.

Harry Widman
(American, born 1929)

Black Oracle

1984
Oil on canvas
59.5 x 49.5 in.
Gift of the artist, 2001.049.001

Harry Widman was born in Englewood, New Jersey, and studied at Syracuse University in New York and, as a graduate student, at the University of Oregon, where his teachers included David McCosh. From 1956 to 1960, Widman taught painting at the University of Oregon Extension Division in Coos Bay and also in Roseburg, Port Orford, Grants Pass, and Salem (for the Salem Art Association). He later was a teacher at the Museum Art School in Portland and was dean of the school when it became the Pacific Northwest College of Art.

Black Oracle, with its freely painted central image set against an active field of colors and brushwork, is a major example of Widman's "image inventions"—abstract forms that he identifies with a particular entity or force, in this case an oracle. The Hallie Ford Museum of Art presented a retrospective exhibition of Widman's work in 2009.





Carl A. Hall
(American, 1921–1996)

The Slough (Minto Island, Salem)

1948
Oil on canvas
29 x 41 in.
Elmer Edwin Young Art Acquisition Fund, YNGAF97.01

A child prodigy in drawing and painting, Carl Hall grew up in Detroit where he studied with the Cuban-born painter Carlos Lopez at the Meininger School. He first saw Oregon as an Army recruit at Camp Adair in 1942, and he and his wife Phyllis settled in Salem in 1946. Hall succeeded Constance Fowler on the art faculty at Willamette University and taught here from 1948 until 1986.

During his first year at Willamette, Hall painted this view of Minto Island near the Willamette River in Salem. It suggests why a critic for *Art Digest* described Carl Hall as a “magic realist”: the meticulous rendering of the grain of the planks, rope, and plants transforms these ordinary details into a heightened, “magical” state in the manner of Surrealism. The Hallie Ford Museum of Art presented a retrospective exhibition of Hall’s work in 2001.



Ruth Dennis Grover
(American, 1912–2003)

Tooth of Time and Razure of Oblivion

1968

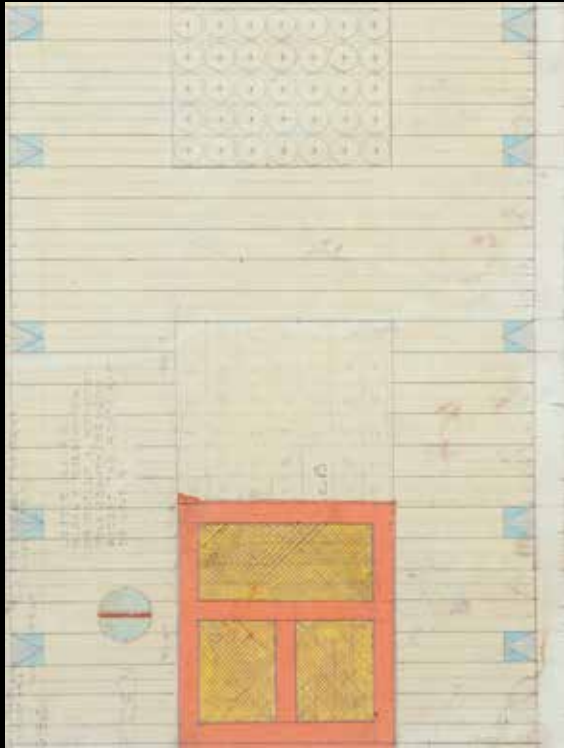
Encaustic on wood panel

36 x 30.75 in.

Gift of Marvin S. and Judith Anne Epstein in honor of Ruth Grover and the Oregon Coast, 2002.01

Ruth Grover, a fifth-generation Oregonian, was born in Portland and grew up in Detroit, Michigan. She studied at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and later, like Carl Hall, with Carlos Lopez in Detroit. She settled in Wecoma in modern day Lincoln City on the Oregon coast in 1940 (later moving to Roads End) and was active, with Maude Walling Wanker, in establishing the Lincoln County Art Center. In 1952, Grover established Cascade Artists, a cooperative that organized exhibitions that traveled to community art centers up and down the coast, throughout western Oregon, and in Idaho, Washington, and California.

A watercolorist, Grover in the 1960s became interested in the ancient medium of encaustic, in which pigments are combined with wax, popularized in the 1950s in the United States by the painter Karl Zerbe. For Grover, encaustic was a medium of abstract patterns, as in this composition inspired by the wreckage of the ship *Peter Iredale* on the Oregon coast. The title of this painting is a quotation from Shakespeare's play *Measure by Measure*.



D. E. May
(American, born 1952)

Reservoir District (224)

2001

Mixed media

12 x 9 in.

Gift of John T. Casey in memory of Larry J. Stobie,
2001.035

Dan May has lived all his life in Salem. He attended McNary High School and studied at the Oregon College of Education (now Western Oregon University), where his instructors included Larry Stobie. His work is represented by the PDX Gallery in Portland and is in the collections of the Portland Art Museum and the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York. In a recent review in the magazine *ARTFORUM*, Stephanie Snyder wrote of "May's passionate exploration of spatial forms, language, and storied materials such as weathered cardboard, old notebook paper, and other unidentifiable objects flattened and compressed by life on the streets."



Nancy Lindburg
(American, born 1934)

Promise

2010

Oil on canvas

48 x 36 in.

Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund, 2010.016.001

At native of Fargo, North Dakota, Nancy Lindburg studied at Mills College in California and the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan before settling in Salem with her family in the 1960s. An arts administrator as well as an artist, she was executive director of the Salem Art Association in the 1970s and visual arts coordinator for the Oregon Arts Commission from 1978 until 1991. *Promise* is characteristic of her recent work with its saturated color and dense overall pattern of thickly applied brushstrokes. Though some of her paintings of this type evoke seasons and the landscape, *Promise* is more purely abstract and metaphorical, addressing a less tangible subject of contemplation.



Michael Brophy
(American, born 1960)

House II

2004
Oil on canvas
52.25 x 58.25 in.
Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund, 2005.009.001

Born in Portland, Oregon, in 1960, Michael Brophy earned his BFA degree at the Pacific Northwest College of Art. A highly regarded landscape painter, Brophy explores the impact of human intervention on Oregon's rivers, forests, and mountains, and the complex relationship between industry, history, and environmental preservation. His work reminds the viewer that the need for natural resources must be balanced with solutions that provide long-term sustainability.

House II depicts the weathered planks of a demolished house, stacked in a great pile of broken, entangled lumber. It was inspired by the remnants of a house that Brophy had seen while driving to Bend, Oregon, in the early 2000s. The artist has always been interested in stacks, heaps, and piles of wood (slash heaps, beaver dams) and found humor and irony in the relationship between this man-made heap of broken, entangled lumber and the stacks, heaps, and piles of wood and detritus found in nature.

This caption was written by John Olbrantz, the Maribeth Collins Director of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art at Willamette University.



Henk Pander
(Dutch-American, born 1937)

Burning of the New Carissa

2010
Oil on canvas
33 x 81 in.
Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund, 2010.043

Soon after the freighter *New Carissa* ran aground in a storm at Coos Bay, Oregon, on February 4, 1999, Henk Pander was on the scene to draw and photograph the wrecked ship. He created seven large paintings of the *New Carissa*, including this dramatic view after the ship was set afire to burn off the fuel. Pander described the scene in his journal: "Suddenly, shockingly, the sky lit up with a huge fireball. The light and fire faded and a huge, low black cloud stretched north along the distant beach."

Henk Pander was born in Haarlem, The Netherlands, and settled in Portland with his American wife and their son in 1965. Apart from periodic trips to Holland, he has lived in Portland for nearly half a century but to this day considers himself a "reluctant immigrant." He strives to maintain an outsider's view of the dramatic scenery and events (such as the wreck of the *New Carissa* or the destruction of the World Trade Center) of North America. The Hallie Ford Museum of Art presented a retrospective exhibition of Pander's work in 2011.



HALLIE FORD MUSEUM OF ART,
WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY

The Hallie Ford Museum of Art was founded in 1998 to serve as an artistic, cultural, and intellectual resource for Willamette University, the City of Salem, the mid-Willamette Valley, and beyond. It includes four permanent galleries, two temporary exhibition galleries, a lecture hall, offices, and support spaces for collections and exhibitions. Permanent galleries focus on European, Asian, and American art; Native American art; historic and contemporary regional art; and European, Asian, and American works on paper. Temporary exhibitions feature historic and contemporary art.

The Hallie Ford Museum of Art is located at 700 State Street (corner of State and Cottage Streets) in downtown Salem near the campus of Willamette University. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. The galleries are closed on Monday. There is a modest admission fee, but Tuesday is always a free day. For further information, please call 503-370-6855, e-mail museum-art@willamette.edu, or visit our website at www.willamette.edu/arts/hfma.

Hallie Ford *Museum of Art*

Willamette University
900 State Street
Salem, OR 97301-3931

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Designed by Phil Kovacevich
Editorial review by Sigrid Asmus
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