

HETAG Newsletter No. 40, February/March 2020



The 2020 CASETA Symposium
and Texas Art Fair

The Doubletree by Hilton Greenway Plaza in Houston, TX
Friday, April 24 - Sunday, April 26, 2020

Register now to attend the [2020 CASETA Symposium](#) in Houston in April. This once-a-year, Early Texas Art extravaganza is only in our city once every five years and this is our year! Houston and the Texas Gulf Coast will be featured on the program this year. See the next page for a full list of speakers/topics. In addition to the roster of fascinating talks, there will be Early Texas Art friends from around the state to visit with, Texas Art Dealers tempting you with irresistible works of Texas art; and enough compelling special events to make sure you don't have an idle minute the whole weekend, including a one-time-only visit to the [Menil Drawing Institute](#) for a look at drawings by Texas artists, a VIP visit to an amazing private collection and the house it lives in; and a CASETA-only exhibition tour of *African American Artists in Texas: Selections from the John L. Nau III Collection of Texas Art*, and reception hosted by John L. Nau III, at the historic Gregory School, Houston Public Library.

THANK YOU to all you HETAGers who joined together to make HETAG a GOLD level sponsor of the symposium again this year. For others, it's not too late to add YOUR name to the [SPONSOR LIST](#). Sponsorship at the \$250 level or above includes a complimentary symposium registration.

REGISTER ASAP to make sure you don't miss out.



Robert Ormerod Preusser, *Germination*, 1946, Oil on Masonite, 16 x 20 inches
The John L. Nau III Collection of Texas Art

2020 CASETA Symposium Speakers

Expanding Abstract Expressionism: Women Artists in Texas

Dr. Amy Von Lintel, Doris Alexander Endowed Distinguished Professor of Fine Arts
West Texas A&M University, Amarillo, TX

Early Galveston Artists, 1850s to 1930s

Eleanor Barton, Museum Curator
Rosenberg Library, Galveston, TX

Texas Made Modern: The Art of Everett Spruce

Dr. Shirley Reece-Hughes, Curator of Paintings, Sculpture, and Works on Paper
Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, TX

Texas Modernism(s): Houston/Dallas in the 1930s

Randy Tibbits, Independent Art Researcher and Curator, Houston, TX

A Conversation: Betty Moody and Sarah Beth Wilson

Betty Moody, Owner and Director Moody Gallery
Houston, TX

Sarah Beth Wilson, Director of Exhibitions and Curatorial Projects
Art League Houston

The Artist as Citizen: Frank Freed's Lessons on the Importance of Social Commentary

Carmen Champion, Professor of Art History, Director Central Campus Art Gallery
San Jacinto College, Houston, TX

Earlie Hudnall, photographer, and Danielle Burns Wilson in dialog

Earlie Hudnall, Photographer
Texas Commission on the Arts 2020 Artist of the Year
Houston, TX

Danielle Burns Wilson, Curator | Manager, Houston Public Library
The African American Library at the Gregory School, Houston, TX

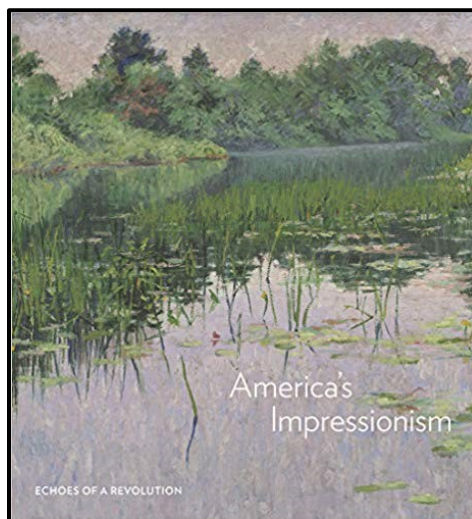
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Emma Richardson Cherry (1859-1954): Ready for her closeup!

Looks like 2020 will be a very good year for our own favorite American Impressionist artist, Emma Richardson Cherry. Our Mrs. Cherry has long deserved wider attention than even those of us in HETAG have been able to give her, and she's about to get it. She will be featured, along with other Texas and American Impressionist artists in the upcoming exhibition

American Impressionism: Echoes of a Revolution

opening this summer in San Antonio and then touring (see schedule below). And now the catalog for that exhibition is available for pre-order from Yale University Press, Amazon and other suppliers. See the description from the YUP website below, where only five artists are mentioned by name, among them **Claude Monet**, **William Merritt Chase** and **EMMA RICHARDSON CHERRY!** Now that's the kind of art company she deserves to keep.



Emma Richardson Cherry c.1887, just before she left for her first visit to Paris and Giverny, where she painted in 1888 and 1889.

[America's Impressionism: Echoes of a Revolution Hardcover – June 30, 2020](#)

by [Amanda C. Burdan](#) (Author), [Emily C. Burns](#) (Contributor), [King Ross](#) (Contributor), [William Keyse Rudolph](#) (Contributor), [Kevin Sharp](#) (Contributor), [Scott A. Sheilds](#) (Contributor)

A beautifully illustrated account of the Impressionist experiment in the United States—showing how the French style was put to distinctly American use

From the late 19th century to the Second World War, American painters adapted Impressionism to their own ends, shaping one of the most enduring, complex, and contradictory styles of art ever produced in the United States. This comprehensive book presents an original and nuanced history of the American engagement with the French style, one that was both richer and more

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ambivalent than mere imitation. Showcasing key works from public and private collections across the United States, this expansive catalogue contextualizes celebrated figures, such as

Claude Monet (1840–1926) and **William Merritt Chase** (1849–1916), among their unduly overlooked—and often female—counterparts, such as **Lilla Cabot Perry** (1848–1933),

Emma Richardson Cherry (1859–1954), and **Evelyn McCormick** (1862–1948).

Essays from leading scholars of the movement expand upon the geography and chronology of Impressionism in America, investigating regional variants and new avenues opened by the experiment. Beautifully illustrated, this volume is a landmark event in the understanding of an important era in American art.

Amanda C. Burdan is curator at the Brandywine River Museum of Art, Chadds Ford, PA.

EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

[San Antonio Museum of Art](#)

(June 12–September 6, 2020)

Listen to a talk about the [Texas artists in the exhibition, including Mrs. Cherry](#), given by co-curator William Keyse Rudolph, Co-Interim Director, Chief Curator and Marie and Hugh Halff Curator of American and European Art at the San Antonio Museum of Art.

[Brandywine River Museum of Art, Chadds Ford, PA](#)

(October 17, 2020–January 10, 2021)

[Dixon Gallery and Gardens, Memphis, TN](#)

(January 23–April 11, 2021)

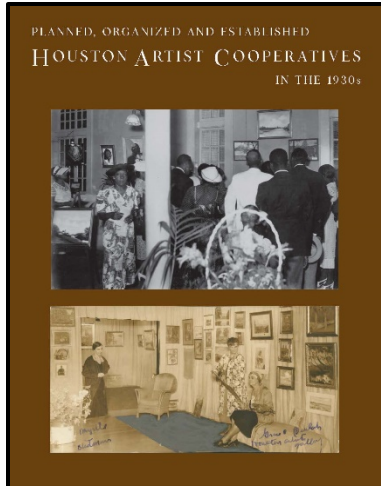
This is one of Mrs. Cherry's splendid impressionist paintings.



Emma Richardson Cherry *On the Gallery, At the Pines* c1894/96 oil on canvas 24x36 inches
Private collection.

William A. Harper 1873–1910: A Black Artist in Houston

Some of you may remember the exhibition [*Planned, Organized and Established: Houston Artist Cooperatives in the 1930s*](#) mounted at the Ideson Gallery of Houston Public Library in 2017. One of the cooperatives was the Negro Art Guild, which included the earliest black Houston artists who were known at the time. The catalog for that exhibition includes a groundbreaking essay on the Negro Art Guild by Kelly Montana, and is available online via the website of [CASETA: Center for the Advancement and Study of Early Texas Art](#).



Now, thanks to the work of researcher Janet A. Nussbaum, we now know of an even earlier black artist active in Houston, William A. Harper, who came to Houston in 1901 to teach “drawing and writing” in the Houston Colored Schools, according to this article from the *Houston Daily Post* September 4, 1901 (last two lines of center column).



William A. Harper, from a photograph published in Chicago News, Feb. 6, 1905.

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The Houston City Directory for 1902/03 shows Harper, “director of drawing and writing Houston (c) public schools” residing at 302 Andrews Street.

BY GOODS AND NOTIONS	LOVEJOY & MALEVINS
	200 [HAR] MORRISON
	SOUTHWESTERN LIFE ASSOCIATION HOME OFFICE: 906 FRANKLIN AVENUE. AGENTS WANTED.
	Harper Thomas J. (Harper & Co.), r. ss Rose bt Brunner, Bethje ayes, Brunner. 5. HARPER WALTER M., resident mgr. Western Newspaper Union, 1129 Franklin ave. Sw phone 328, r. 1509 Preston ave. 2. Harper William (c), director of drawing and writing Houston (c) public schools, bds 302 Andrews.



Houston city directory for 1902/03 (l); Houston Colored High School, later Booker T. Washington High School, on San Felipe Street (now West Dallas Avenue) (r).

Not much more is known about Harper’s time in Houston, and none of his extant work can definitely be dated to his time in Houston, so there is still work to be done. This intriguing biographical sketch by Wendy Greenhouse, PhD is [available on the web](#).

William A. Harper moved as a boy from his native Cayuga, in Ontario, Canada, to the Illinois towns of Petersburg and then Jacksonville before arriving in Chicago. As an African American with limited opportunities for employment, he took a job as a janitor at the Art Institute of Chicago while saving money in order to study at its school. Harper enrolled in 1895 and graduated with honors in 1901. Early that year, the Art Students’ League of Chicago annual show at the Art Institute included three landscapes by Harper that were “said to be among the most perfect on exhibition,” according to a Chicago newspaper reviewer.ⁱ

Harper went to Houston, Texas, to teach drawing. While there, he was represented in the 1902 annual exhibition of the Chicago Society of Artists with two landscapes, one of which was reproduced in the Chicago art journal *Brush and Pencil*. The following year, two of his paintings were juried into the Art Institute’s serial Chicago artists’ exhibition, in which Harper would participate annually for the remainder of his short life. During a sojourn in Europe from 1903 to 1905, Harper studied at the Académie Julian in Paris and painted in France and in Cornwall, England. Dubbed the “janitor artist” in the Chicago press, he won a Municipal Art League prize for his group of nine paintings in the Art Institute’s Chicago artists’ exhibition in 1905.ⁱⁱ That year, when Harper exhibited with the Society of Western Artists, he was named one of five “rising young men” on the Chicago art scene in the periodical *The World Today*.ⁱⁱⁱ By 1907, the Union League Club of Chicago had added three of Harper’s works to its art collection.^{iv} During this period, the artist

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painted during his leisure daytime hours and supported himself by working as a night-watchman at the Art Institute.

In 1907 Harper returned to Europe, where he worked alongside landscape painters William Wendt and [Charles Francis Browne](#). He studied in Paris under expatriate artist Henry Ossawa Tanner. Harper won the Young Fortnightly Prize in the Art Institute's Chicago artists' exhibition in 1908. His health was failing when he traveled later that year to Mexico, where he painted until shortly before his death from tuberculosis at age thirty-six. A memorial exhibition of sixty works at the Art Institute drew wide notice in the Chicago press, where it was observed that at his death Harper "already had marked a vital impress upon the art of his home city."^v

ⁱ *The Conservator*, Feb. 16, 1901, in Art Institute of Chicago Scrapbooks, v. 14, Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, Art Institute of Chicago.

ⁱⁱ "Colored Man Wins Position," *Chicago News*, Feb. 6, 1905.

ⁱⁱⁱ James Spencer Dickerson, "The Society of Western Artists," *World Today* 10 (1905): 299.

^{iv} L. M. McCauley, *Catalogue of Paintings, Etchings, Engravings and Sculpture* (Chicago: Union League Club, 1907), 14, 49. These painting were deaccessioned at an unknown date.

^v "Among the Artists," *Chicago Record-Herald*, Aug. 7, 1910.



William A. Harper *The Trees, Early Afternoon, France* c1905, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (l); *Staircase* 1908 (r).



William A. Harper *Late Summer Landscape* nd.

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[THE GLORY OF SPAIN](#): Houston Connection



This magnificent exhibition, giving us 4000 years of Spanish art, from the Hispanic Society of America, will be on view at [Museum of Fine Arts, Houston](#), through May 25, 2020.

When you go, keep an eye out for the Houston connections. First, and most obviously, there's this early 18th Century map. It was hand-drawn in ink and wash over a hundred years before Houston was founded, but, if you know your geography, you can spot where we would one day be. Sharp eyes may also see Galveston Bay. In fact, it shows all of what is now Texas, and more.



Francisco Alvarez Barreiro *Map ... of the Provinces ... of New Spain* 1728.

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And then there's the not quite so obvious Houston connection of this painting.



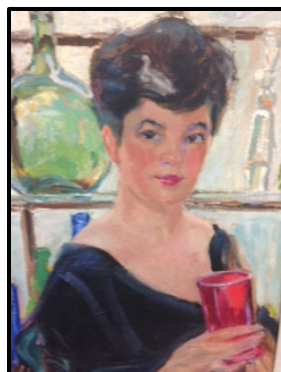
Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida *Louis Comfort Tiffany* 1911.

Sorolla, who was at the time one of the most famous and sought after artists in the world, did this gorgeous painting in the garden of Tiffany's Long Island estate, Laurelton Hall. Only a few years later, in 1923, Houston artist Grace Spaulding John (1890-1972) received a fellowship to study at Laurelton Hall. She likely saw this portrait there, which entered into the rich mix of lush visual splendor that surrounded her – and influenced her own art.

At Laurelton, John made a number of paintings, including these three, now in the collection of Washington University in Saint Louis, where she also studied.



Grace Spaulding John *Laurelton Hall*, *The Chapel Door*, *Tiffany's Terrace* 1923.



Grace Spaulding John *Self Portrait* (1928); *The Lighted Candle* 1923.

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Exhibitions of interest:



Herb Mears *Westward Ho (the Roadster)* 1987

Houston

[Herb Mears: Memoirs of a Mid-Century Master, A Fifty Year Retrospective](#)

Foltz Fine Art

Through March 21, 2020

San Antonio

[Texas Women: A New History of Abstract Art](#)

San Antonio Museum of Art

Through May 3, 2020

Including Houston artists Dorothy Hood and Terrell James.

Kassel, Germany

[Forrest Bess](#)

The Fridericianum

Through May 3, 2020

The first exhibition of Forrest Bess paintings in Germany over in 30 years.

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The mission of HETAG is to illuminate Houston's art history by providing viewing opportunities for art, by supporting and doing research on the artists and art communities working in Houston through the years, and by spreading the word.

**Back issues of the HETAG Newsletter are available via the
University of Houston Libraries Digital Library
Now including issues 1-31, March 2016 – March 2019
<https://digital.lib.uh.edu/collection/hetag>**

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Texas Art Group
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Dick Wray Untitled Oil on canvas c1960s.