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Methods of Nature: Landscapes from the Gettysburg College Collection

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Methods of Nature: Landscapes from the Gettysburg College Collection

Description

Methods of Nature: Landscapes from the Gettysburg College Collection is the third annual exhibition curated by students enrolled in the Art History Methods course. The exhibition is an exciting academic endeavor and incredible opportunity for engaged learning, research, and curatorial experience. The five student curators are Molly Chason '17, Leah Falk '18, Shannon Gross '17, Bailey Harper '19 and Laura Waters '19. The selection of artworks in this exhibition includes the depiction of landscape in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century French, American and East Asian cultural traditions in various art forms from traditional media of paintings and prints to utilitarian artifacts of porcelain and a paper folding fan. Landscape paintings in this exhibition are inspired by nature, specific locales and literature. Each object carries a distinctive characteristic, a mood, and an ambience. Collectively, they present a multifaceted view of the landscape in the heart and mind of the artists and intended viewers. [*excerpt*]

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Comments

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METHODS OF NATURE

Landscapes from the Gettysburg College Collection

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Landscapes from the Gettysburg College Collection

CURATED BY Molly Chason
Leah Falk
Shannon Gross
Bailey Harper
Laura Waters

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF Yan Sun

EDITED BY Yan Sun
Shannon Egan
Molly Reynolds
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M*ethods of Nature: Landscapes from the Gettysburg College Collection* is the third annual exhibition curated by students enrolled in the Art History Methods course. The exhibition is an exciting academic endeavor and incredible opportunity for engaged learning, research, and curatorial experience. The five student curators are Molly Chason '17, Leah Falk '18, Shannon Gross '17, Bailey Harper '19 and Laura Waters '19. The selection of artworks in this exhibition includes the depiction of landscape in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century French, American and East Asian cultural traditions in various art forms from traditional media of paintings and prints to utilitarian artifacts of porcelain and a paper folding fan. Landscape paintings in this exhibition are inspired by nature, specific locales and literature. Each object carries a distinctive characteristic, a mood, and an ambience. Collectively, they present a multifaceted view of the landscape in the heart and mind of the artists and intended viewers.

Fascination with the natural world has long been an inspiration for landscape painting in eastern and western cultural traditions. Western European artists of the early nineteenth century imbued Nature with transcendent quality. Romantic philosophy of the time dictated that Nature should be seen as a religious experience, revered as an awe-inspiring power that can create and destroy. The French painting *Beach Landscape with Fishermen* exemplifies this perception. The detailed portrayal of the seascape in contrast to the ambiguous expression of the fishermen conveys the idea of the sublimity of Nature and insignificance of mankind.

The fabricated Japanese and Chinese style landscape on a late nineteenth-century *Satsuma Vase* is a visual cue of Western world's fascination with the East Asian culture and arts. Produced during a time when the Japanese government encouraged increased interaction with the Western world through the export of Japanese artwork, the landscapes portray romanticized scenes based on traditional styles of painting, rather than showing a realistic, modern Japan. The landscapes evoke a sense of imagined travel for the viewer. The elaborate surface decoration—intricate patterns of flowers and geometric shapes rendered in gold—stands out against the dark blue background. These patterns flow and fall around the landscape paintings, creating an almost dreamlike sensation. The viewer becomes entranced by the beauty of the piece and the imagined places depicted.

Similarly, the *Chinese Folding Fan* of the late nineteenth or early twentieth century also conveys themes of travel. Made as a luxury souvenir item for a lady, the painting of West Lake in Hangzhou illustrates a landscape that is at once real and inspired. Scenic landmarks labeled in calligraphic text are shown in an exaggerated perspective, looming larger than reality against the blue-green mountains. Accompanying poetry on the reverse side of the fan enhances the viewer's experience of the place both during her travels around West Lake and in memory as she looks at her fan to recall the trip. The style of painting and subject matter also invoke cultural memory for an elite, scholarly society focused on the portrayal of nature through literature and art during the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279).

Landscapes as imprints of the cultural identity of a nation are well illustrated in two Japanese prints of first half of the twentieth century. Kawase Hasui and Kasamatsu Shirō capture glimpses of their home nation, Japan, through traditional methods of wood-block printing in the *hanmoto* system. While the works fall under the artistic category of the landscape, they portray and convey much more, ultimately acting as markers of cultural identity. By viewing and portraying the land a certain way, the prints stand out as a part of the *nihonga* tradition as well as the *shin-hanga* movement that swept Japan in the early twentieth century. A revival of the traditional art form of wood-block printing, *shin-hanga* meant that there were associations of cultural identity underlying the art itself due to the method's long history as representative of Japanese aesthetics. The prints can be classified as "landscape," yet they function as a combination of landscape and "portrait," conflating the land with a sense of cultural identity.

The depiction of a specific place in Nature is the subject matter of two American landscape paintings, *Gettysburg from McLean's Hill* and *Delaware Water Gap*. The former is one of twenty-five plein air sketches created by Union veteran George Leo Frankenstein in 1866 three years after the fierce battle at Gettysburg, a turning point in the American Civil War. The surviving Gettysburg landscape is a solemn witness and perpetuating monument of a critical moment in American history. The latter, *Delaware Water Gap*, is a landscape that celebrates the natural beauty in America. Inspired by the British aesthetic theory of the Sublime, William Mason Brown recreated the enchanting beauty of Nature in an illuminating "riverscape." The emphasis of the specificity of the locale in the landscape is a reflection of a growing appreciation of the wildness of native scenery in America, and conveys a broad message of physical and ideological nation-building in the United States in the late nineteenth century.

The idea of landscape as a means for personal expression is well manifested in three paintings of twentieth century. Pu Ru, a member of the last royal family of the Qing dynasty (1644-1921), upheld the highest literati principle in life and in art. Inspired by eighth century Li Bai's poetry,

Pu's landscape depicted the poet in Nature using distinctive calligraphic brushstrokes and subtle colors. The writing of Li Bai's poetry in a semi-cursive script at the upper right corner of the painting articulated the literati ideal of the three perfections, poetry, calligraphy and painting. The painting is not just a personal homage to a highly acclaimed Chinese literary figure, but an artistic tradition and literati culture passed down to Chinese scholars since the Song dynasty (960-1279). A sense of longing conveyed through the landscape and poetry, however, is highly personal.

American painter Stephen Etnier considered his realist landscapes a visual diary of his travels and his surroundings. Many of his landscape paintings, including *The 8:14* in the exhibition, depict his home and identity in Maine. His landscape conveys his love for life and the moment he was living. In contrast to Etnier's realistic approach, Russian-American artist Vladimir Shatalow's abstract landscape of spontaneous brushworks in the *End of Summer* is a personal expression of the seacape and can be understood as a poetic and artistic interpretation of Nature. Shatalow successfully adapts to American culture by creating landscape paintings that combined his techniques acquired from his studies in Russia and Ukraine with his own personal interpretation of cubism and American Color-Field painting.

A wide range of art historical methods are explored in the research of the artworks in the exhibition, including visual analysis, material and technical study, connoisseurship, biography, and iconography. Students also contextualize the artworks socially, politically, and culturally. Student essays in this catalogue provide thoughtful reflections on a wide variety of research subjects and art history methods. The essays are also fruits of mentorship our students harvest from the immense support and generosity of several faculty and staff members at Gettysburg College. We owe sincere thanks to Shannon Egan, Director of Schmucker Art Gallery, as well as Carolyn Sautter, Molly Reynolds and Catherine Perry, at the Special Collections and College Archives of the Musselman Library for their generous assistance and insightful suggestions during the preparation of the exhibition and catalogue. We thank Meggan Smith for her research and instruction session on the library's art resources, and Robin Wagner, Dean of the Musselman Library, for her encouragement and tireless promotion for art on campus. Their patience, enthusiasm, and support demonstrate the valuable academic experience our students have enjoyed at the Gettysburg College. It is our hope this exhibition will showcase not only the hidden treasures in our Gettysburg College collection, but positive learning outcomes for our students.

—Yan Sun, Professor of Art History
Molly Chason, Leah Falk, Shannon Gross,
Bailey Harper and Laura Waters

BAILEY HARPER

Attributed to French artist Charles Hoguet, *Felsige Kustenpartie mit Staffag (Beach Landscape with Fishermen)*, states the specific characteristics of this landscape in its title; “felsige” translates to “rocky” or “craggy”; “kustos” and “partie”, combined in the German fashion as “kustenpartie” can be understood as “curated lot.” The key word in the title is “staffag;” “fishermen” is stated in the English translation on a label affixed to the back of the frame, but this term could be translated more accurately as “accessory” or “decoration.”¹ Although the artist is named as “L. Hoguet” in this label, printed perhaps when the painting was exhibited at a later date, no artist with this name “L. Hoguet” appears in the art-historical literature or in the collections of other institutions. This oil painting, which adopts a style reminiscent of the Romantic period roughly around 1800-1850 in Western Europe, is consistent with the style, subject and time period of Charles Hoguet. In keeping with the ideals of Romanticism, Hoguet suggests that the fishermen are but accessories to the land and to the grandness of Nature.

During the period of Romanticism in Western Europe, the concept of the “awesome, sublime nature” spurred interesting sentiment towards landscapes in philosophy and the

arts.² Artists depicted landscapes that emphasized the idea that mankind is much smaller in comparison to their surroundings. Nature, with a capital “N,” was considered to be a spiritual experience that captivated and controlled every aspect of human life. Despite its size, the landscape still brings that same emotion; as mere human beings, we are not greater than what constantly surrounds us.

Hoguet, a master of his medium, creates a captivating painting despite its extraordinarily small surface. The artist manipulates the paint to create the effect of mist and also keeps attention focused on the larger subject. The detailed cliffs next to the foggy water and dark, cloudy sky collide over the blurry figures in the foreground. Even though these fishermen are part of the subject, atmosphere and the natural landscape appear most important to the artist. This style reflects the soft and blurred edges, yet well detailed underlying structure of French artist Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot’s later work with lyrical landscapes in the 1850s.³ In many of Corot’s works, figures are seen underneath a grand frame of trees and landscape almost worshipping their surroundings. The one figure who stands out in *Felsige Kustenpartie* is in the lower center of the plane, to where the eye naturally falls. This fisherman

is the only one depicted with strong contrasting colors and is located in the open, while the others are shown with gradually duller hues, falling further underneath an overhang of rock. It is very difficult to tell, but there is even one very blurred figure bending behind two small rocks to the right of the figure in red. Like Corot, Hoguet depicts people interacting with the landscape; however, these fishermen are clearly only accessories within their large, dramatic surroundings.

Sublimity is the defining characteristic of this painting. At a glance and disregarding the title, this work looks like a simple, rocky beach on a foggy day. To see the subject in its entirety, the viewer must step closer to the postcard-sized image, almost diving into the scene to find the finer details of the landscape. Because of their stature, the rocks take over the scene and hide the fact that people are underneath and utilizing the shore for their benefit. A dark storm front looms on the left edge of the painting; the weather causes the tides to rise and brings the fish closer to the workers, but also warns them to be wary. In the Romantic view of the work, we are reliant on our imposing landscape; it shields us, and, at the same time, it can harm us.

1 *Linguee | English-German Dictionary*. Linguee.com. Accessed September 24, 2016. <http://www.linguee.com/english-german>.

2 H.W. Janson, et al., *Janson’s History of Art: The Western Tradition, Art in the Age of Romanticism, 1789-1848* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007), 824.

3 *Ibid*, 848-850.



Felsige Küstenpartie mit Staffag
(Beach Landscape with Fishermen)

Attributed to Charles Hoguet (French, 1821-1870)

c.1850

oil on panel

27.5 x 33.5 x 6 cm

Gettysburg College Fine Arts Collection

Gift of the Stuckenberg Estate

Special Collections and College Archives

LEAH FALK

George Leo Frankenstein, born George Leo Tracht in Germany in 1825, completed this *plein air* sketch in 1866, the year following the end of the American Civil War. The artist and his family emigrated to Cincinnati, Ohio in 1831, and Frankenstein began his artistic career during the early 1850s while assisting his brother Godfrey, also a painter, with a panorama of Niagara Falls. He worked briefly in portraiture until the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 and joined the commissary department of the Union Army.¹

Following the end of the Civil War in May of 1865, Frankenstein visited and recorded the landscapes where battles had taken place over the past four years. He sought to depict these significant sights before their features would change with time. Frankenstein journeyed over three thousand miles, much of the trip by foot, through the United States. His travels led him through Gettysburg, Knoxville, Vicksburg, and throughout Virginia, before returning to Gettysburg in 1866 to exhibit his portfolio of landscape sketches. *Gettysburg from McLean's Hill (Oak Hill)* is part of this series of about twenty-five paintings completed on site, rendering different sections of the famed Gettysburg battlegrounds.²

There is a sense of immediacy tied to this sketch of *Gettysburg from McLean's Hill*. Frankenstein was

compelled to return as quickly as he could to the battlegrounds of the Civil War. He sketched what he saw on site, and, as a veteran who fought for the North, Frankenstein maintained a personal connection to the significance of the battlefield. From his vantage point on Oak Hill, where the Eternal Peace Light Memorial stands today, Frankenstein observes the muggy landscape of a “crossroads town;” eleven roads radiate from Gettysburg, which made it a pivotal location for battle. This sense of crossing in the sketch is punctuated by the winding Mummasberg Road to the left of center and the vertical lines of tree stumps, bushes, and brush that extend towards the right.

The stump that sits at the bottom right corner of the frame reminds the viewer that Gettysburg has not abandoned its memory of the momentous battle where many lives were lost; the event would have a lasting impact on the town, the American people, and the country's identity itself. The viewer is then drawn towards the soft, quick strokes of the hill, the abstract rendering of leaves and bushes, and the milky sky, which recall the artist's process of painting the landscape on site. The red house is a focal point, as its color and geometric shape contrast with the natural forms of the landscape surrounding it. Frankenstein looks

over this land known as McLean's farm, which became the locus of fighting on the first three days of July 1863. The red barn is also a namesake of its owner, Moses McLean. The land was overtaken by Union and then by Confederate soldiers over the course of the battle, but was returned relatively unharmed to its original proprietor. The quiet, pastoral landscape presented by Frankenstein distinctly contrasts the rush of activity and bloodshed that had occurred in the year prior to the sketch's completion. Here in 1866, this land and its barn has survived; the touch of the American Civil War immortalized the landscape of Gettysburg as a symbol of national history, patriotism, and victory. The College edifice sits in the background, slightly left of center and is what Pennsylvania College (now Gettysburg College) may have looked like on July 1, 1863. Frankenstein employs atmospheric perspective to depict the landscape now recognized as Gettysburg National Military Park. The light, natural colors of the foreground lead into darker layers of blues and purples constituting the horizon, which is more densely packed with smaller brush strokes. The artist emphasizes the expanse of the landscape with darker, distant mountains; the scene feels at once large and local.

¹ Mary Sayre Haverstock and Jeannette Mahoney Vance, *Artists in Ohio, 1787-1900: A Biographical Dictionary*, edited by Brian L Meggitt (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2000).

² *Gettysburg College Bulletin*. “Gettysburg Library Receives Valuable Historical Documents” (December 1933):12.

³ Lenard E. Brown, “McClellan House and Barn at Gettysburg Historic Data Section, Part II.” *McClellan House and Barn Gettysburg National Military Park, Pa* (Gettysburg: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1968), 1–19. <http://npshistory.com/publications/gett/mcclellan-house-barn.pdf>.

*Battlefield Painting –
Gettysburg from McLean's Hill*

George Leo Frankenstein (German, 1825-1891)

1866

oil on paper

19.5 cm x 29 cm

Gift of Reverend Lyman Whitney Allen

Civil War Era Collection

Special Collections and College Archives



Chinese Folding Fan

late nineteenth to early twentieth century
paper, golden paint, ivory, ink, wood
19.69 cm (l)
Gettysburg College Fine Arts Collection
Special Collections and College Archives



SHANNON GROSS

Sudi Causeway in Spring Dawn, Breeze-Caressed Lotus in Yeast Courtyard, Autumn Moon on Calm Lake, Melting Snow on Broken Bridge, Orioles Singing in Willows, Viewing Fish at Flower Harbor, Thunder Peak Pagoda in Sunset Glow, Twin Cloud-Piercing Peaks, Evening Bell at Nanping Hill, Three Pools Mirroring the Moon: these are the “Ten Scenic Views of West Lake” depicted on the *Chinese Folding Fan*. Each name poetically arouses the senses, invoking the act of viewing for the fan’s owner. Rather than showing a realistic portrayal of the West Lake area, the painting combines topographical painting with an imagined landscape. The scene is displayed in a slanted aerial perspective, giving a clear lay of the land. Each of the “Ten Scenic Views” is exaggerated in size on the map-like landscape with their names marking the spot in calligraphy. People interact with the scene, enjoying the lake and surrounding area. On the back of the fan, the views are listed with

accompanying verses of poetry, playing further into the beauty associated with the place. The blue and green style of the painting brings the mountains and lake to life against the elegant, gold paint background. Details are emphasized through line rather than shading, as seen in the brushstrokes deftly outlining the forms of the people, trees, and architecture. The paper spread of the fan is painted entirely in gold and features wooden inner ribs and ivory outer ribs. Such a luxurious item was meant for an elite member of society; the short length of the ribs suggests it was intended for a lady.¹

Poetry and painting of the Ten Scenic Views became prominent during the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279) when the capital of China was relocated to Hangzhou in the Yangzi Delta Region. With the move of the capital, tourism in Hangzhou and other areas of the south from members of the Southern Song court increased. The

folding fan is a symbol of the lifestyle of the southern elite.² A necessary accessory in the hot, humid southern weather, the fan combines utility with beauty. Made during the latter part of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912), the *Chinese Folding Fan* reflects nostalgia for the Song Dynasty through its subject matter—scenic nature sights around West Lake—and blue-green style of painting, a form popular during the Song Dynasty.

During Emperor Qianlong’s reign, topographical paintings, characterized by aerial perspective and labeled sites, were commissioned to document his tour of the southern region of China. The fan’s depiction of West Lake is associated with an elite lifestyle; moreover, the materials used to make the fan were expensive and demonstrated the necessity of the artists’ skills. The fan provided a way for the traveler to beautifully commemorate her trip, but it also marked her higher social status.

1 Gonglin Qian, *Chinese Fans: Artistry and Aesthetics* (San Francisco: Long River Press, 2004), 36.

2 Chen Xu, “Hang Fan,” *Chinese National Geographic* (2009), <http://www.dili360.com/ch/article/p5350c3d88f64134.htm>

3 Claudia Brown, *Great Qing* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014), 78-80.

SHANNON GROSS

With its finely detailed surface decoration of abstract pattern and landscape paintings, the *Satsuma Vase* conjures up images of ornamental Japanese scenery. While Japan has a long history of pottery making, the production of Satsuma ware began in the late nineteenth century alongside other changes in the social structure, politics, economy, and international relations of Japan.¹ As a result of the US-Japan Treaty of Amity and Commerce in 1858, during the Meiji Period (1868-1912), increased interaction with the Western world in the form of trade was encouraged.² Export of Japanese pottery increased after international exhibitions across North America and Europe, such as the International Exposition of 1867 in Paris, exposed Western eyes to goods and materials from the Eastern world for the first time.³ Satsuma ware, named for the region in which it was produced, was seen as definitive of Japanese decorative wares to Western buyers.⁴ Catering to the Western tastes and ideas of the East, Satsuma potters evolved their craft and created lavishly decorative pieces. Painted with intricate patterns and scenes, the artists placed less emphasis

on the form of the pottery and more on the surface decoration. Gold flowers and geometric shapes, reminiscent of the silk cloths for kimonos, cascade down two panels of dark blue over-glaze and meet at the foot and the shoulders of the vase.

Through the decorative landscape, the viewer is given the chance to imagine travel in a foreign land. The scenes displayed a romanticized Eastern world, rather than a realistic portrayal of Japanese landscape. The two landscapes show influence from the Kano school of painting, which began in the fifteenth century and combines Chinese painting techniques and subjects with Japanese aesthetics and culture, remains influential today.⁵ One painting exhibits traditional Chinese subject matter through a nature themed landscape. Mandarin ducks are depicted playing in a winding river that recedes into a background of tall mountains. The calligraphic gesture of the tree branches recalls the emphasis placed on brushstrokes in Chinese painting. Blooming plum blossoms forecast the spring season and symbolize the resilient character of the Chinese literati. Here Chinese

subject matter and motifs combine with the colors and intricate gold details of Japanese works. The other painting depicts a scene more reminiscent of Japanese, or Yamato-e style painting.⁶ The slanted perspective offers a broad view of the scenery and the interactions of the people within the landscape. A number of everyday activities take place in the composition: children play, a merchant peddles his wares, couples converse intimately, and a family enjoys the beautiful day. Inclusion of both Japanese and Chinese style landscapes suggests the object's purpose as a trade object. The artist wanted the work to cater to multiple tastes. These scenes, while inspired by traditional painting styles, were intended for Western eyes. The landscapes along with the border decorations complies with Western ideas of the East inspired by the decorative works—beautiful, elaborate, romantic. Landscape scenes depicted on the Satsuma Vase serve as a means for Western buyers to experience an imagined foreign land within the comfort of their homes.

1 Claire Pollard, *Master Potter of Meiji Japan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 18, 21.

2 Ibid, 18.

3 Ibid, 21.

4 Gisela Jähn and Michael Foster, *Meiji Ceramics: The Art of Japanese Export Porcelain and Satsuma Ware, 1868-1912* (Stuttgart: Arnoldsche, 2004), 133-135.

5 Department of Asian Art, "The Kano School of Painting," in *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000), http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/kano/hd_kano.htm (October 2003)

6 Ibid.



Satsuma Vase

c. 1868-1912

black and gold Satsuma porcelain

15.5 x 4 x 4.2 cm

Gettysburg College Fine Arts Collection

Special Collections and College Archives

Delaware Water Gap

William Mason Brown (American, 1828-1898)

c. 1860-1890

oil on canvas

46 cm x 71 cm

Gettysburg College Fine Arts Collection

Gift of Christopher Matthaei, Class of 2001

Special Collections and College Archives



LEAH FALK

William Mason Brown (1828-1898), born in Troy, New York, worked in portraiture before he painted landscapes. Brooklyn, New York is where Brown established himself as a significant mid-nineteenth century artist and founder of the Brooklyn Art Social, later the Brooklyn Art Association, and regular exhibitor at the National Academy of Design.¹ Brown's still life paintings won the most commercial success, though his landscapes remain a significant part of the artist's legacy. These paintings are known to convey nature's immense beauty and brilliant colors. The Romantic tradition is alive in *Delaware Water Gap*; the painting reflects the style's prominence in both American and European landscapes of this period and in the work produced by Hudson River School artists, a group in which Brown was a second-generation member.

Delaware Water Gap was completed during the height of the Hudson River School's influence in the mid nineteenth century; by which time, the group had become well-established under its unofficial leader, American painter Thomas Cole.² These artists utilized the "national riverscape" at this moment of physical and ideological nation building in the United States. A search for identity and pride was an undercurrent of the arts, from Romantic landscape painting to transcendentalist literature. The "riverscape" was an avenue of expressing the striking natural beauty proudly possessed by this country.³ Artists frequently portrayed an idealized American wilderness and conveyed a sense of pioneering and exploration.⁴ These motifs of nature defined a sense of nationalism in the United States and specifically reflected significant westward expansion and the notion of "manifest

destiny" in the nineteenth century.

This assertion that natural beauty can be equated to a sense of American character and nationalism can be seen in *Delaware Water Gap*. The Hudson River School artists were mainly located in the greater New York City area. Brown depicts the water gap that sits on the border of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Over the water is a setting sun, casting a romantic reflection on the gap and illuminating an overall glow on the frame. This lighting creates a symmetry of the composition and adds an element of drama to the landscape. There is a depth in terms of perspective and in the warm autumnal tones of the palette. The natural trees and brush direct the eye back towards the sun, a reminder of vibrancy, life, calm, and the goodness of man and nature which transcendentalism espouses.

1 Laura E. Handlin, "William Mason Brown (1828-1898)," *Questroyal Fine Art, LLC*, n.d. <http://www.questroyalfineart.com/artist/william-mason-brown>.

2 Barbara Novak, "Thomas Cole: The Dilemma of the Real and the Ideal," in *American Painting of the Nineteenth Century: Realism, Idealism and the American Experience* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 52-58.

3 Tricia Cusack, "The Chosen People: The Hudson River School and the Construction of American Identity," in *Riverscapes and National Identities* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2010), 1-19.

4 Kevin J. Avery, "The Hudson River School," *The American Wing, The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 2004. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/hurs/hd_hurs.htm.

BAILEY HARPER

Pu Ru's painting illustrates a fascinating approach towards nature by using multiple artistic expressions in traditional Chinese literati painting. Along with poetry by Li Bai (701-764), which is in semi-cursive calligraphy on the top right corner, a vertical landscape captures a sense of melancholy. In his poem *Autumn Air*, Li writes, "Falling leaves gather and scatter, the jackdaw perches and starts anew." The phrase following the couplet, unwritten in the painting, is, "When shall we meet and stay close?" This poem speaks of a longing for a lost friend or love and suggests a sense of yearning that is reflected in the lifeless trees below the couplet.¹ The trees are varied in ink tones, nearly barren of leaves, and hold a solitary nest that rests alone at the top of one tree. Even as hints of colors are introduced, the image in its entirety forms a desolate, empty environment that leaves the viewer wanting. By reflecting on both image and poetry, the viewer understands the feelings of longing and personal loss conveyed in Li

Bai and Pu Ru's works.

Pu Ru, the cousin of the last emperor of China, learned art through the royal collections at a young age and studied both literati work and artists themselves.² Pu Ru remained a loyal adherent of literati art since the Song dynasty of the eleventh century. In his writing, he stated that painting reveals "personality, character, and tolerance. If there is nothing about the person that one should learn from, then how would audiences be able to take away from the painting."³ The very emphasis on art for personal expression is at a core of literati paintings in Chinese art history. As a literati artist and a leftover royalty after the fall of the dynasty, Pu demonstrates his nostalgia for "old" China that once was alive.

Akin to Pu's literati work, *guohua*, or national-style painting, served as an artistic style to promote traditional life rather than the westernized aesthetic becoming popular as China entered into post-dynasty government structure.⁴ Despite the new politics shifting typical

cultural aspects of China, the art market still prized their literati-style paintings. *Guohua* was typically taught in modern academy settings rather than the traditional setting and, while it aided preserving the literati style, it ultimately failed to recreate the deep scholarly knowledge historic scholars held.⁵ After returning from his studies in Europe, Pu went to a scholarly retreat in the 1910s in the mountain range the west of Beijing, spent much time at the Jie Tai Monastery, and took the alias "Xishan Yishi," meaning "Hermit of Mt. West." He took students and taught them in the traditional fashion, rather than modern, forming almost parental relationships with them. "Xishan" disciplined his students in the strict training it took to become a "true" literati artist. Students' skills increased in difficulty over many years, starting with pure calligraphy and poetry and eventually studying the landscape as a whole.⁶ This type of training demonstrates Pu's respect and dedication for the disciplined and traditional methods of the arts.

1 Max Holleran, *Autumn Wind*, trans., Liang Yujing, Julian Farmer. October 15, 2013. Accessed October 11, 2016. <https://bostonreview.net/poetry/li-bai-autumn-wind>.

2 "From the Dynasty of Old: A Special Exhibition of the Art of P'u Hsin-yu." Accessed October 11, 2016. <http://www.npm.gov.tw/english/exhibition/fu0010/intro-e.htm>.

3 Chen Li-Yun, *Self-style Performance in Pu Hsin-Yu's Landscape Paintings*, 485-488. Accessed October 11, 2016. http://tao.wordpedia.com/show_pdf.aspx?sess=mll0mdbhwz413sr3jceb0rxix&file_name=JO00000758_6_465-492&file_type=q.

4 Charles Lachman, *Guohua (National-Style Painting)*, in *Berkshire Encyclopedia of China: Modern and Historic Views of the World's Newest and Oldest Global Power*, Vol. 2 (Great Barrington, MA: Berkshire Publishing, 2009), 969-971. Gale Virtual Reference Library (accessed October 2, 2016). <http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=GVRL&sw=w&u=gett36723&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%7CCX3008200282&asid=7a5e18cd43d755abfa737c008df27de0>.

5 Jane Zheng, "Transplanting Literati Painting into the Modern Art School System: 'Guohua' Education at the Shanghai Fine Arts College, 1924-1937," *Studies in Art Education* 52, no. 1 (2010): 34-54. <http://ezpro.cc.gettysburg.edu:2068/stable/25746080>.

6 *Pu Xinyu*. China Online Museum. Accessed September 23, 2016. <http://www.chinaonlinemuseum.com/painting-pu-xinyu.php>.

7 *From the Dynasty of Old: A Special Exhibition of the Art of P'u Hsin-yu*. Accessed October 11, 2016. <http://www.npm.gov.tw/english/exhibition/fu0010/intro-e.htm>.

8 Kathlyn Maurean Liscomb, "Li Bai, a Hero among Poets, in the Visual, Dramatic, and Literary Arts of China," *The Art Bulletin* 81, no. 3 (1999): 367.

Pu's use of iconography, Tang dynasty poet Li Bai in this case, reflects his appreciation for traditional China and its historic literature.⁷ Li was portrayed in two distinctly different ways; while one artist named him an "Immortal of Wine," whose excessive drinking positively affected his work; others saw him as the hero of the arts as an "apotheosis of Daoist transcendent."⁸ His image was often altered depending on the respective artist's attitude of him. This painting depicts the latter attitude. Li is framed under an arch of trees, separated from the rest of the party, and appears scholarly with an almost Confucian persona. As the viewer scans down the image after the elongated calligraphy and into the landscape, they see Li looking upwards to the sky, as if reading the same poem the viewer has just finished. Using Li Bai's couplet, Pu uses his image to portray the literati ideals of the three perfections—calligraphy, painting, and poetry. With this combination, Pu employs images and words to evoke the viewer with the same sense of nostalgia for historic China.

Picture of Falling Leaves Gather and Scatter

Pu Ru or Pu Xinyu (Chinese, 1896-1963)

1924

ink and color on silk

124 cm x 59 cm

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Rain in Maekawa, Sōshū

Kawase Hasui (Born Kawase Bunjirō, Japanese, 1883-1957)
1932

woodblock print, ink on paper, oban tat-e format
35 x 23.5 cm

Gettysburg College Fine Arts Collection
Special Collections and College Archives

LAURA WATERS

Rain in Maekawa, Sōshū (*Sōshū Maekawa no ame*), published in February 1932, belongs to a seven-print series titled *Selection of Views of the Tōkaidō* (*Tōkaidō fūkei senshū*).¹ One of the many collaborations between painter Kawase Hasui and publisher Watanabe Shōzaburō, the print represents the *shin-hanga* (new print) movement, a revival of traditional *ukiyo-e* style wood-block prints. *Rain in Maekawa*, completed in 1931, reflects Hasui's method of generating designs from sketches made during his frequent and extensive travels through Japan.² In his 1979 compendium of Hasui's work, *Kawase Hasui mokuhangashū* (collection of woodblock prints by Kawase Hasui), Narazaki Muneshige describes the subject, "a rainy night, a row of thatch-roofed houses line the street."³ Dominated by various shades of gray, the print vacillates between the mundane and the majestic, presenting viewers with an everyday image, but one that also emphasizes powerful natural forces. The dark and richly graded colors act as a compositional foil to the warmth in the lighted windows and their reflections on the rain-soaked street, balancing dark and light within the composition and creating an internal harmony. Though the rain and the night are dark, there is an implicit sense of

man being at peace with nature within the print. The scene itself is familiar with the row of houses quiet and the lone figure, a recurring motif in Hasui's work, headed home through the rain. Yet, the large silhouette of trees that dominates the left side of the composition serves as a reminder of the constant presence of nature and of man's dependence on nature, the respect that must be paid to it, and its deep-seated power. At the lower left-hand corner, the *Hasui* signature with the red *Kawase* seal is visible, accompanied by the publishing seal of Watanabe. The print also demonstrates the great technical skill of the collaborating artist, carver, and printer: the variations in tone and color, as well as the effect of the rain, were no easy matter to reproduce in traditional wood-block printing.

Narazaki writes that *Rain at Maekawa, Sōshū* was "one of Hasui's favorite [prints]."⁴ Based on evidence offered by the artist himself, Hasui was drawn to the sense of tranquility of the print combined with its evocation of the traditional landscape of Japan; its form, style, and subject displays similarities to that of the great master of *ukiyo-e* prints, Hiroshige (1797-1858).⁵ In a time when the country was undergoing rapid changes, Hasui remained dedicated to a traditional aesthetic in each of his

prints.⁶ This evocation of tradition was integral to the *shin-hanga* movement, the "renaissance" of Japanese printmaking. Though *ukiyo-e* had fallen out of favor for their reputation as reproduction instead of 'true' art, the rise of modern reproductive art forms, like photography, as well as a sense of nationalism, led to their revitalization in *shin-hanga*.⁷ *Shin-hanga's* emphasis on tradition is easily visible in Hasui's work. The houses are identical to those portrayed by Hiroshige along the Tōkaidō a century earlier; the figure wears traditional garb, and even the printmaking system Hasui used and the publisher Watanabe employed were traditional.

Hasui's portrayal of everyday Japan in *Rain in Maekawa*, with no direct identification of place beyond the work's name, allows it to represent more of an idea of Japan as a whole, rather than illustrating a specific physical locale. By representing this more general Japanese landscape, Hasui emphasizes cultural traditions at a time when they were threatened by modernization and Westernization. Therefore, his portrayal of the landscape connects with the poetic idea of Japanese tradition and also preserves his culture's way of seeing, interacting with, and belonging to one's homeland.

1 The author would like to thank Professors Keiko Yamanishi and Jing Li for their help on the translation of the Japanese.

2 Kendall H. Brown, *Visions of Japan: Kawase Hasui's Masterpieces*, ed. Amy Reigle Newland, (Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2004), 22, 24.

3 *Ibid.*, 142.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*, 26.

6 Barry Till, *Shin Hanga: The New Print Movement of Japan* (San Francisco: Pomegranate Communications Inc., 2007), 19.

7 *Ibid.*

LAURA WATERS

S*pring Evening at Tokyo Ueno Park* (*Haru Yoi, Pagoda, Ueno Park*), was published in 1948 as a collaboration between Kasamatsu Shirō and the publisher Kinjiro.¹ It comes at the end of Shirō's tenure in the *hanmoto* (collaborative print) system, demonstrates his involvement with the *shin-hanga* movement and exhibits his skill in depicting landscapes.²

Spring Evening depicts only three main elements: a full moon, a pagoda, and flowering cherry trees; yet, the composition does not appear empty. The artist fills the whole space of the print, and the upward motion of the pagoda, identified possibly as that of the Toshogu shrine, pulls the eye of the viewer through the entire work. Shirō emphasizes a sense of otherworldliness and ephemerality with the dominance of the moon, the transient nature of the cherry blossoms, and the slightly muted colors of the ink. What is unusual about the work is the how the landscape is framed; the viewer does not see how the architecture and the trees intersect with the implied ground plane. Set above

eye level, this unusual architectural landscape is typical of Shirō's work, as he is known largely for inventive portrayals of architecture.³

An examination of the climate of pre and post-war Japan in the 1940s gives the motifs of the print important context and offers a fuller understanding of the work's historical and cultural significance. The two most prominent aspects of the landscape, the pagoda of Ueno park and the blossoming cherry trees, have intrinsic ties to the identity of the Japanese people. *Sakura*, cherry blossoms, were adopted as an emblem of Japanese identity during the Edo period (1615-1868).⁴ The blossoming of the trees represents life, and their short-lived nature is indicative of the mortality of humans.⁵ During the years of the war prior to Shirō's publication of *Spring Evening*, the symbolic associations of cherry blossoms with life, death, and the Japanese soul were all utilized in propaganda to encourage the recruitment of *tokkōtai* (kamikaze) pilots, as they were told, "You shall die like beautiful falling cherry petals" for

Japan.⁶ While the imagery of cherry blossoms was militarized and sullied by death in the course of the war, their traditional connection with spring and rebirth was not forgotten, especially in the post-war period. Ueno Park was also important for the people of Japan, specifically the people of Tokyo. Established in 1876, Ueno Park was the first public space of its kind in Japan and grew into an essential facet of the city of Tokyo. During the war, however, Ueno Park was not exempt from the suffering that overtook Japan; air raids and firebombing greatly damaged the grounds, and many displaced peoples took shelter there after losing their homes. Ueno Park served as a gathering-place during the war, and though it fell into disrepair during the violence, it was restored by the people of the city shortly after peace was declared.⁷ These visual representations of Japanese identity and resilience in the face of suffering come together to form one celebratory image, portraying the rebirth of a people and their traditions in a blossoming spring landscape.

1 "Item Details for Kasamatsu Shiro (1898-1991) "Spring Evening at Tokyo Ueno Park"," *The Japanese Art Open Database*, September 9, 2016. <http://www.jaodb.com/db/ItemDetail.asp?item=30497>.

2 Helen Merritt, *Modern Japanese Woodblock Prints: The Early Years* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), 61.

3 Barry Till, *Shin Hanga: The New Print Movement of Japan* (San Francisco: Pomegranate Communications Inc., 2007), 21.

4 Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms: The Militarization of Aesthetics in Japanese History* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 10-11.

5 *Ibid.*, 28-29.

6 *Ibid.*, 3.

7 "About Us: The History of Ueno," *UENO Cultural Park.com*, Implementation Committee for New Concept, accessed 22 September, 2016, <http://ueno-bunka.jp/en/about/history/>.



Spring Evening at Tokyo Ueno Park

Kasamatsu Shirō (Japanese, 1898-1991)
1948

woodblock print, ink on paper, *oban tat-e* format
26.5 x 38.6 cm

Gettysburg College Fine Arts Collection
Special Collections and College Archives

MOLLY CHASON

Born in York, Pennsylvania, American realist painter Stephen Etnier and his family frequently traveled to Maine in his youth. Sailing and travel played an important role in Etnier's life and provided the subject matter for his art. Due to his restless need for adventure and his relative lack of academic motivation, Etnier attended numerous schools and universities during his academic career, until he finally transferred to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 1925, where he studied for four years.¹ Etnier then obtained private apprenticeships with renowned American painters Rockwell Kent and John Carroll, and in 1931, Etnier mounted his first solo exhibition at the Dudensing Galleries in New York, marking the start to his successful artistic career.

Etnier passed through three distinct artistic phases during his evolution as a painter. However, his devotion to light, quick brushstrokes and elimination of unnecessary detail served as the unifying features throughout his oeuvre.² Etnier's landscape paintings during his first artistic phase in the 1930s and 1940s often convey social gatherings and picturesque scenes that resonate with charm and are frequently painted with a palette of subdued greens.³ Following World War Two and the death of his third wife Jane Pearce in 1949, Etnier's second artistic phase during the 1950s and 1960s reflects a shift from the sublime to the somber. His landscape paintings during this era often

lack color and human figuration and are characterized instead by gloomy marine and winter scenes and dimly lit early morning settings. Etnier spent most of the year during this phase painting scenes of Maine; however, he continued to travel and pursue his interest of painting in exotic locations during the winter months. Etnier's work during this phase favors industrial and working scenes, and often portrays quotidian subjects such as telephone poles and electric signs.⁴ Etnier became fascinated with images of consumer culture, and geometry also became an essential element in his work during the 1960s. Landscape paintings with warmer color palettes belong to the final artistic phase of Etnier's career in the 1970s and 1980s, and his last paintings are refined variations of his favorite themes of his earlier subjects and scenes.⁵

The painting in this exhibition, titled *The 8:14*, was painted during his second artistic phase, during the post-war period, in which Etnier served in the Navy. Upon his return home, Etnier destroyed many of his previous paintings and focused his attention on his home and identity in Maine.⁶ The painting represents railroad tracks in Brunswick, Maine and is therefore characteristic of his post-war subject matter and style. Overall, the painting emphasizes a sense of horizontality and focuses on the play of geometric forms among the architectural structures and is depicted with flat, unmodulated color. Although no figures are depicted

in the landscape, the approaching train, houses, and cars imply a human presence and influence, as well as offer a suggestion of narrative. The landscape was painted during the early morning light and suggests a somber mood, characteristic of many of his paintings during this point in his artistic career.

Through a mixture of realism and luminism, Etnier's landscape paintings portray the technically precise rendering of forms and perspective, focusing on the effects produced by direct and reflected light in the atmosphere. Specifically, Etnier was intrigued by the phenomenon of light when it generated narrowing diagonals of brightness and shadow, or when it advanced towards the foreground of his paintings.⁷ To capture the qualities of early morning light, the artist habitually rose before dawn to paint on site. Etnier also made use of photographs to assemble the necessary parts he needed in his compositions, and therefore sometimes referred to himself as a "part-realist," because his paintings often resembled snapshot photography.⁸

Even during the push toward non-representational abstraction in post-war American art, Etnier maintained his realist ideals and continued to paint what his eyes could see.⁹ It is therefore important to note that Etnier's stylistic swings were not influenced by the current artistic trends of his time, but rather were personal statements and served as a visual diary of his travels and his surroundings.

The 8:14

Stephen Morgan Etnier (American, 1903-1984)

1953

oil on canvas

75 x 110.5 cm

Gettysburg College Fine Arts Collection

Gift of the American Academy of Arts and Letters

Childe Hassam Fund

Special Collections and College Archives



1 Daniel E. O'Leary, *Journeys Over Water: The Paintings of Stephen Etnier* (Portland, Maine: Portland Museum of Art, 1998), http://www.stephenetnier.com/journeys_2.html.

2 Patrick Foltz and Wade Lawrence, "An Introduction the Artist and His Works," *Stephen Etnier* (York, Pennsylvania: Historical Society of York County, 1989), n.p.

3 O'Leary.

4 Betty Chamberlain, "Stephen Etnier: A Long Voyage Home," *American Artist* 36 (June 1972): 48.

5 O'Leary.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Foltz and Lawrence, n.p.

9 Ibid.

End of Summer

Vladimir Shatalow (Russian, 1917-2002)

1976

acrylic on board

89 x 89 cm

Gettysburg College Fine Arts Collection

Gift of the Henry Ward Ranger Award from the
National Academy of Design

Special Collections and College Archives



MOLLY CHASON

As a result of the turmoil and horror of World War Two, artist Vladimir Shatalow, born in Belgorod, Russia in 1917, came to the United States in 1951 and resided in Philadelphia.¹ Before his emigration, Shatalow received formal training in Ukraine at the State Institute of Fine Arts in Kharkov, the State Institute of Arts in Kiev, and at the Dnepropetrovsk Art School under the instruction of the distinguished artist Michael N. Panin.² While Shatalow developed a fundamental foundation through his years of study in Russia and Ukraine, what makes Shatalow successful compared to other foreign-born artists, is that he adapted almost effortlessly to his new culture.³ Upon his arrival to America, Shatalow gained recognition as an avant-garde poet and artist.⁴ He took ideas from cubism and American color-field painting, while embedding Russian ideals into his work. His paintings often varied in style, including landscape paintings based on the classical Russian tradition that were also reminiscent of Western symbols and colors.⁵

Soon after Shatalow came to America, he began collaborating with Russian-American artist Serge Hollerbach to start the creation of the Society of Russian Artists. As a notable poet, Shatalow also worked

with Valentina Sinkevich to cofound the literary and artistic almanac *Encounters* and served on the journal's editorial board. The goal of the publication was to bring together poets and artists of various waves of Russian emigration. Additionally, Shatalow co-authored anthologies of poetry of the Russian Diaspora, was a member of the National Academy of Design, and a member of the Russian Academic Group.⁶

End of Summer is an abstracted landscape, which demonstrates Shatalow's successful integration of his academic background in Russia with the ideals of Cubism and American Color-Field painting. Blocks of solid colors, consistent with the style of American Color-Field painting, fill the composition. The landscape is comprised primarily of various tones of violet and blue and earth tones of green and brown. An architectural form dominates the left side of the painting, including a moderately developed window as well as forms that suggest the presence of additional windows. Approximately seven seagulls, some more detailed than others, appear in the painting as curved lines and subtle gradations of white and gray. The focus on color and light play an important role in the ambiance of the painting. Additionally, the visible horizontal and

vertical brushstrokes allow viewers to see the artist's hand in the making of the work. Shatalow makes no clear distinction between the foreground and background, and the landscape depicted is uncertain. The artist varies the thickness of the paint throughout the painting to emphasize the overall abstraction of the work through the blending of colors. In some areas, paint is applied in thin layers, whereas in others, there is a distinctly heavier layering of paint. In the bottom of the painting, for example, Shatalow layers white and pink paint in heavy strokes. Consistent with the ideals of Cubism, the abstracted landscape does not utilize the traditional techniques of perspective and foreshortening. Instead, the landscape emphasizes the two-dimensionality of the canvas, through fractured objects and geometric forms.

In keeping with his contemporary Color-Field painters, Shatalow does not depict the human figure, but the seagulls suggest the sense of life and movement. Shatalow expresses a meaningful encounter with the earth, sky, and water. It can therefore be inferred, from the title of the work, the use of color, and the life forms depicted, that the painting portrays a beach scene at the end of the summer.

1 The author wishes to acknowledge the people who helped in the research of this painting and artist, specifically Meggan Smith, Research and Instruction Librarian and Coordinator of Reference Services at Gettysburg College.

2 Vladimir Shatalow, *Newman Galleries*, accessed October 10, 2016. <http://newmangalleries.com/artist/1048>.

3 Drew Saunders and Burton Wasserman, *Eight Russian-American Artists: George Bobritsky, Sergei Bongart, Constantine Cherkas, Serge Hollerbach, Michael Lasuchin, Victor Lasuchin, Vladimir Odinkov, Vladimir Shatalow* (Wayne, Pennsylvania: Newman & Saunders Galleries, 1983), n.p.

4 Shatalow's artworks have been displayed at over 150 group and solo shows and have won more than 100 awards. Most of his works of art can be seen in museums in America, but during the recent years, are also displayed in Russia. С.М. Кокурина. "American Artists of Russian Origin in the Museum Collection of the Solzhenitsyn House for the Russian Diaspora (DRZ)," *Solzhenitsyn Centre of Russian Emigré Studies*, accessed September 12, 2016, <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/u/0/exhibit/gQ9Y6IRH>.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Saunders and Wasserman, n.p.

METHODS OF NATURE

Landscapes from the Gettysburg College Collection

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Presentations by Student Curators in
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Reception: 4:30-6:30pm

Curated by Molly Chason, Leah Falk, Shannon Gross,
Bailey Harper and Laura Waters under the direction of Professor Yan Sun

Exhibition supported in part by the Department of Art and Art History and
Special Collections and College Archives, Gettysburg College

Cover: *Delaware Water Gap*, William Mason Brown (American, 1828-1898), c. 1860-1890, oil on canvas, 46 x 71 cm.
Gettysburg College Fine Arts Collection, Gift of Christopher Matthaei, Class of 2001

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