

The Arts Center of Kershaw County in Camden, SC, Offers Works from ArtFields Collection

The Arts Center of Kershaw County in Camden, SC, is presenting ArtFields Extended: The Arts Center of Kershaw County, on view through Sept. 23, 2023, in the Basset Gallery at the Arts Center.

Lake City ArtFields Collective started in 2013 with a simple goal: honor the artists of the Southeast with a week's worth of celebration and competition in the heart of a traditional Southern small town. With over \$145,000 in cash prizes each year, the competition empowers hundreds of contemporary Southern artists to create dazzling new works. As a part of that competition, over 400 works of art are displayed annually across Lake City, SC. Many artists enter the competition, and some will earn an award - but only the grand prize winner is added to the ArtFields permanent collection each year.

A cross-section of some of the best art produced in the Southeast, *ArtFields Extended: Arts Center of Kershaw County* features a selection of incredible works from the permanent collection. Each work captures a piece of the time, place, and social context in which it was created, serving as a powerful testament to the incredible talent and perspective of Southern artists.

"The ArtFields Collective is doing incredible work to engage Southern artists and grow the arts community in the southeast," says Arts Center Executive Director, Dolly Patton. "We are honored to share this exhibition with our community."

"We are so thrilled to have a selection of ArtFields winners on display at the Arts Center of Kershaw County," says ArtFields Marketing Manager, Roberta Burns. "This exhibition truly gives a taste of what the ArtFields event is all about - celebrating Southern artists and the stories they have to tell through their artwork. We hope visitors will be inspired by this work and proud of the caliber of art coming from the Southeastern region."

This exhibition will be the first in the Art



Work by Alexi Torres, a winner from 2017 Center's newly renovated Basset Gallery. With fresh paint and flowing hardwood floors that invite guests into the space, the renovation creates the perfect environment to engage with each exhibition. The Arts Center is especially grateful to the Steven's Foundation and the Sally and Austin Brown Fund for making our gallery renovation possible. This impactful work would not be possible without their support!

The Arts Center of Kershaw County was founded to bring arts experience and exposure to all ages. Today, the Arts Center continues that work as it pursues its core mission to create an environment that promotes artistic and cultural experiences and provides superior educational, instructional and entertainment opportunities that elevate and enrich the community for all residents of Kershaw County and beyond.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Center at 803/425-7676 or visit (www.fineartscenter.org).

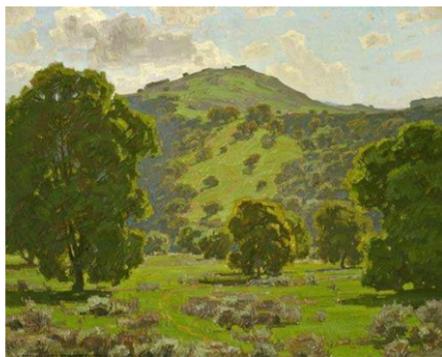
Blowing Rock Art & History Museum in Blowing Rock, NC, Offers Exhibit of California Art

Blowing Rock Art & History Museum (BRAHM) in Blowing Rock, NC, is presenting the exhibit, *GIFTED: Collecting the Art of California at Gardena High School, 1919-1956*, organized by the GHS Art Collection, Inc. in association with the Gardena High School Student Body and curated by Susan M. Anderson, on view through Dec. 30, 2023.

BRAHM, located in the picturesque mountain town of Blowing Rock, NC, is not only the first east coast venue for the exhibition, but the first venue outside of California. This a major exhibition that examines the art collection in a display of 48 paintings and archival materials. The exhibition and accompanying publication chronicle the history of the school's ambitious endeavor within the context of the wider cultural scene in Los Angeles, revealing that a broader public than was previously known - one driven by educational rather than economic values - participated in the development of Southern California art.

From 1919 to 1956, students in the senior class selected, purchased, and donated some 72 works of art to the high school as class gifts. Over the years, artists, the federal art projects, and other individuals and organizations also made many gifts of art to the collection. In 1923, Gardena High School designed a new auditorium to house the permanent collection, establishing the first public art gallery in Southern California with a collection of regional art. Since the mid-1950s, the collection has been in storage and unavailable for viewing by the public.

The exhibition provides the first opportunity to see the collection in its entirety since 1956. The year 2019 marked the 100th anniversary of the collection.



William Wendt, "Along the Arroyo Seco", 1912, Oil on canvas, 40x50 inches. Gift of Class of Summer 1924, Collection of Gardena High School Student Body. Image courtesy of the Gardena High School Art Collection, LLC.

Gardena High School established the collection when plein-air painting flourished in Southern California, setting the tone for the high school's collecting emphasis during the following decades. The high level of sophistication demonstrated by the students' choices was the result of the aesthetic discourse and collaboration nurtured by the school. Most works selected prior to World War II were plein-air landscapes, evidence of regional artists' fascination with the area's natural beauty and art currents popular at the time.

The exhibition includes works by prominent painters of California Impressionism, including William Wendt, Edgar Payne, Hanson Duvall Puthuff, Jean Mannheim, Franz Bischoff, Maurice Braun, Alson Clark, Agnes Pelton, and Marion Wachtel among others. Later works by Hugo Ballin, Loren Barton, Maynard Dixon, Emil Kosa, and Francis de Erdely reflect the influence of the American Scene movement popular during the Depression era as well as the

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dramatic shifts in style characteristic of the art of the post-war period.

In 2013, Gardena High School alumni created the nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization GHS Art Collection, Inc. for the protection and preservation of the works of art owned by the Gardena High School Student Body. "The exercise in collecting and organizing an art exhibition exposed the students and the wider community to lessons in art appreciation, as well as in good citizenship, collaboration, and debate. The collection still ties generations of students and community members together in the Gardena Valley," said Bruce Dalrymple, an alumnus of the high school and board president of the GHS Art Collection, Inc.

"In anticipation of the 100th anniversary, we called on the community once more to raise funding to have the paintings examined and treated by professional conservator Eugena Ordonez and moved off campus to storage with proper humidity and climate control. And we sought out an art historian to tell the extraordinary story of the collection for future generations to enjoy. It is an example of the power of art to bring a diverse population together."

This exhibition is accompanied by a 216-page, color-illustrated publication *GIFTED: Collecting the Art of California at Gardena High School, 1919-1956*, written by scholar of California art, Susan M. Anderson,

former curator of Laguna Art Museum. The exhibition catalog, co-published with the former Pasadena Museum of California Art and designed by Garland Kirkpatrick, is the definitive study of the history and importance of the collection within a regional and national context.

GIFTED: Collecting the Art of California at Gardena High School, 1919-1956 was organized by the GHS Art Collection, Inc. in association with the Gardena High School Student Body and curated by Susan M. Anderson.

BRAHM's presentation of this exhibition is generously supported by: The Mariam & Robert Hayes Charitable Trust, The Catsman Foundation, Monica & Chip Perry, Lou Gottlieb & Gloria Lipson, Our State Magazine, an anonymous donor, and Monkee's of Blowing Rock.

BRAHM (Blowing Rock Art & History Museum) is an art and history museum nestled in the mountains of North Carolina. Open to the public since 2011, BRAHM provides cultural enrichment by promoting the arts, and Southern Appalachian heritage and history, through educational programs, exhibitions, activities, and permanent collections.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Museum at 828/295-9099 or visit (BlowingRockMuseum.org).

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