



(UN)SETTLED

THE LANDSCAPE
IN AMERICAN ART



Exhibition tour:

Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts

January 26–April 14, 2024

Columbia Museum of Art

June 15–September 8, 2024

Mobile Museum of Art

October 12, 2024–February 2, 2025

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

June 12–September 14, 2025



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**THE LANDSCAPE
IN AMERICAN ART**

Front cover: Thomas Cole (1802–1848), **View in the White Mountains**, 1827 (detail)

Art Bridges +  **WADSWORTH ATHENEUM
MUSEUM OF ART**

A CROSS-REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

(Un)Settled brings artworks from different localities together to build a more comprehensive version of America's long and storied history. Drawing from four museum collections, this cross-regional partnership, known as the American South Consortium, fosters collaboration between a network of curators and educators with varied communal and cultural experiences to enrich the interpretation of American art.

Led by the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, Connecticut, the multi-year partnership includes the Columbia Museum of Art in South Carolina, the Mobile Museum of Art in southern Alabama, and the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts in central Alabama.

The cohort is supported by the Art Bridges Foundation, a national nonprofit that provides financial and strategic support to museums. The innovative partnership helps create access to American art and explores new ways of interpreting art and the American experience through dynamic exhibitions and complementary public programs.



Installation view, Columbia Museum of Art, 2024. Photo by Lukas Kuypers

LAURA LEONARD, *Art Bridges Project Coordinator and Curatorial Researcher, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art.* With **ERIN MONROE**, *Krieble Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art*

WHY (UN)SETTLED?

From natural wonders to the open road, the landscape has long been a muse in American art. Through objects from the colonial era to the present, *(Un)Settled: The Landscape in American Art* explores the rich, complicated, and evolving topic of the landscape across time. An array of diverse media and makers helps to redefine whose view is considered, ultimately revealing the many ways artists turn to their surroundings to reflect on larger topics such as national identity, land preservation, the complexity of cultural landscapes, and how location shapes our sense of self.

The term “unsettled” refers to multiple concepts—people, places, feelings, ideas—that are changing or are not yet resolved. The concept of unsettling also implicates the physicality of land as an enduring touchpoint. Representations of the landscape show throughlines of cultural and land preservation, environmental impact, politicization of borders, and the rise and decline of structures over time. When considering the variety of terrain and regional differences, it becomes apparent that there is no singular American landscape or community.



Top: William Dunlap (b. 1944), *Late Rock Light*, 1984; bottom: Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe (b. 1951), *Jake with his boat arriving on Daufuskie's shore*, 1978

BEVERLY BUCHANAN

Beverly Buchanan's *Frank Owen's Blue Shack*, the featured image in the exhibition's graphic identity, embodies this project's multi-regional approach and reflects the dynamic nature of the partnership within the cohort. Buchanan's life and work were shaped by her experiences in different parts of the United States. Raised in eastern North Carolina, where the Piedmont region meets the eastern Coastal Plains, she made her way to New York City. There she obtained master's degrees in biology and public health from Columbia University. After more than a decade working in healthcare, Buchanan decided to pursue her art full time and moved back to the South.

Her works address collective memory in the landscape of the American South. She knits together perspectives, reflecting upon the connections and dissonances of our backgrounds and lived experiences. Buchanan once explained, "I think that artists in the South must at some point confront the work of folk artists not so much in terms of the work but of the persons and the work as being of and from the same place with the same influences, food, dirt, sky, reclaimed land, development, violence, guns, ghosts and so forth."¹

Buchanan's work often pays tribute to Black communities she visited throughout Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. She amassed years of research—which she called "groundings"—that included oral histories, folklore, and photographs of vernacular architecture. She created sculptures, drawings, and poems, often inspired by and titled for individuals who embodied the spirit of the place, such as Frank Owen.

Significant to this exhibition is how Buchanan's structures directly engage the human element of the environment. The small shacks' vibrant colors and rough-hewn materials help to foreground the connectivity between people and place. More aptly, *Frank Owen's Blue Shack* commemorates the local over the national, recognizing the unique ethos of the region. Buchanan reflects on the ebb and flow of communities over time, mirrored in the built environment which is likewise settled and unsettled.

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The practice of connecting the landscape to the search for national identity in North America flourished in the nineteenth century. Views of the northeastern wilderness shaped how



Beverly Buchanan (1940–2015), *Frank Owen's Blue Shack*, 1989 © Estate of Beverly Buchanan

¹ Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Beverly Buchanan Papers, Box 2, Folder 24: Artist Statements and Writings by Beverly Buchanan, 1981–2001.

THOMAS COLE



Thomas Cole (1802–1848), *View in the White Mountains*, 1827

American painters—then mostly white men of privilege—chose elements of the landscape as symbols for the newly formed United States. **Thomas Cole** is considered the father of the Hudson River School, an informal alliance of artists who helped establish an “American” style of landscape painting. These artists turned to the country’s magnificent wilderness and rugged topography for inspiration. Mountains, rivers, and waterfalls conveyed promise and potential. Historically, the people defining the American landscape failed to include diverse cultural perspectives. When considering a wider variety of media and makers, however, it is clear that Americans have always used the landscape to reflect the values of their culture, community ethos, and geographic location in their work.

In Cole’s *View in the White Mountains*, people and nature peacefully coexist. Yet at the center of this scenic view is a cleared path, a sign of imminent settlement of the land. Even in this early mindset, he grappled with tension between progress and preservation of the environment, evident in the central figure walking along the pathway with an axe over his shoulder. Two hundred years later, questions remain unresolved about the benefits achieved and the costs suffered in the name of progress.

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There are communities whose connection to the land has been unwavering and profound for thousands

GEORGIA HARRIS, ARZADA SANDERS

of years. For millennia, Catawba—commonly Ye Iswā, meaning “people of the river”—have ceremoniously dug clay from the Catawba riverbed in South Carolina. The process to create distinctive earthenware pottery is done entirely by hand, from extracting the raw material to the finished vessels.

To form the desired shape, the pots are built using ropes of clay that are coiled or looped on top of one another, then the layers are smoothed and shaped by natural tools such as mussel shells or rubbing stones. The vessel is left to dry for several days, after which it is burnished and can be incised. The pieces are then fired in an outdoor wood-fueled pit, resulting in their unique black and tan coloration that is revealed after the object is extracted from the ashes.

Clay molds may be used to add decorative elements, as seen in **Georgia Harris's** *Bowl with Effigy Heads*, where the protruding handles were cast before being attached to the base. The molds and other sculpting tools are heirlooms passed down through generations of potters. Just as the tools are culturally significant, the symbols too hold deeper meaning. Effigy heads, which are used to remember and tell the stories of important ancestors or

spiritual characters, became a motif in Harris's work. This mold represents Chief Nopkehee, who led the Catawba from 1754 to 1763 and advocated for cultural preservation while adapting to a changing world.² Harris is celebrated for documenting and preserving the craft, saying: “I am not only reviving the oldest Catawba shapes I know, but I am also studying the old designs and using them to decorate my pottery.”³

Storytelling is used in many communities as a form of relaying personal history, community bonding, and cultural preservation. The blacksnake, seen on **Arzada Sanders's** *Gypsy Pot with Serpent*, is ingrained in the oral history of the Catawba. Prior to westernization, blacksnakes were tattooed on the backs of elite warriors as an emblem of love and respect. Though the exact origin of this symbol is unknown, the snake pots are among the most popular designs and the blacksnake remains a central element in Catawba folklore.

• • •
William Christenberry's photographic practice similarly tells personal stories about his family farm in Hale County and the many other sharecropping communities in central Alabama. By



Georgia Henrietta Harris (1905–1997)
Bowl with Effigy Heads, c. 1973



Arzada Sanders (1896–1989)
Gypsy Pot with Serpent, 1973



Georgia Henrietta Harris, **Bowl with Effigy Heads** (detail)

² Chief Nopkehee is commonly known as King Hagler. He was designated the title “king” by white settlers who understood Indigenous chiefs to be the kings of their tribal nation due to their leadership roles.

³ Lorene B. Harris, Thomas J. Blumner, and Brett H. Riggs, “Glimpses of a Nearby Nation: The Making of Catawba Pottery with Georgia Harris and Edith Harris Brown,” *Southern Cultures* 14, no. 4 (Winter 2008): 105.

WILLIAM CHRISTENBERRY

revisiting these sites over the span of decades, his photographs document how once-tamed land ultimately reclaims its autonomy.

Christenberry began documenting vernacular architecture in Alabama in the late 1950s, and after relocating to the North in 1961, he returned annually to record the effects of time on familiar sites. He developed a new perspective on his Southern roots: "Living ... 806 miles from Tuscaloosa, [gave] me perspective on home that I don't think I would have

if I still lived there. I don't think I could see it as clearly."⁴ Christenberry's familial connection to the area shaped the way he photographed places. His images of the countryside capture personal memories and are often accompanied by family lore, helping keep the spirit of late friends and relatives alive. People rarely appear in his images yet somehow the buildings reflect the resilience of their inhabitants.

Prior to Christenberry, many photographers ventured to the South

as outsiders. Their images presented a narrow view of rural life that reduced the complicated story of a place to simple cabins and their rugged inhabitants. The sharecropper became a symbol of the deep-seated issues of the South, including poverty, racism, and capitalist greed. In contrast, photographers such as Christenberry brought an alternate perspective through firsthand lived experiences. In so doing, the structures become beacons of hard work and perseverance, the vitality of people and dignity

of place, challenging the often-perpetuated narrative of regression in the American South.

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Grappling with the unsettling of the country—through social movements, physical relocation, gentrification, or degeneration of places—plays an

⁴ William Christenberry quoted in J. Richard Gruber, *William Christenberry: The Early Years, 1954–1968* (Augusta, GA: The Morris Museum of Art, 1996): 3.



William Christenberry (1936–2016), **House with Flag, Greensboro, Alabama**, negative 1977, printed 2003 © William Christenberry



William Christenberry (1936–2016), **Tenant House, near Havana, Alabama**, negative 1961, printed 2002 © William Christenberry

BENNY ANDREWS

essential role in **Benny Andrews's** work. Andrews reflected on the realities and challenges growing up in a sharecropping family in Georgia, concepts that frequently emerged in his imagery. He lived most of his adult life in cities such as Chicago and New York, but he always considered himself a product, socially and culturally, of the South. He recalled time spent working on a cotton plantation as the most difficult and formative of his young life: "In the fields and things like that ... I used to dream and see a lot of things ... I developed my imagination that way. And so actually, a lot of my work comes from my feelings of those times."⁵ During this period, his mother insisted—against the will of the plantation owner—that Andrews attend school in the off-season and on rainy days when there was no work. He was the first person in his family to graduate high school.

Andrews's personal life and the values that were instilled early on continued to inspire his art throughout his career. In *Rows from Here to Eternity*, a Black farmer looks over crops that extend to the horizon. The airy atmosphere and prideful stance of the figure suggests that he is admiring his hard work with a sense of ownership. In this representation, Andrews perhaps

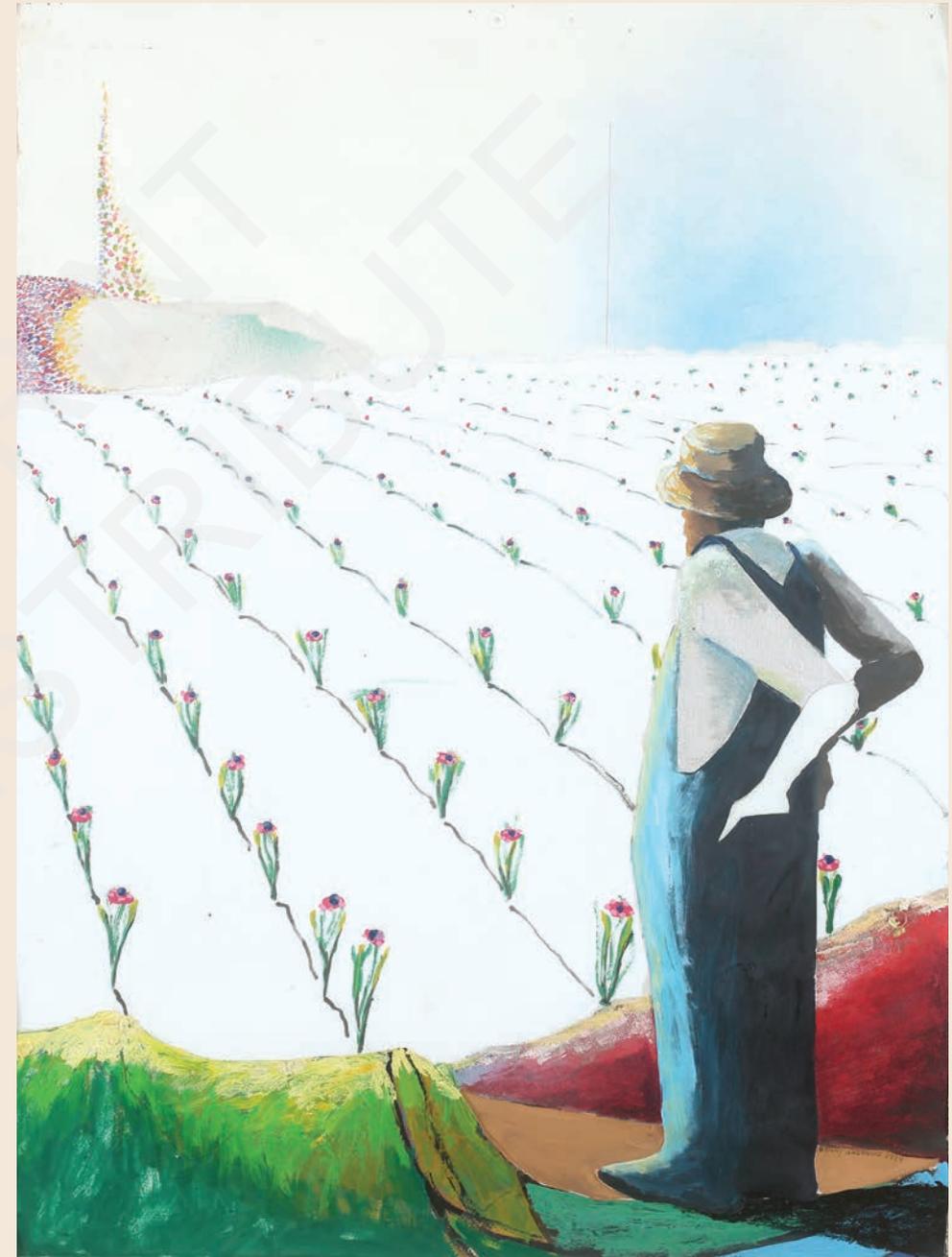
reflects upon the sharecroppers who possessed the fortitude required to survive physical demands and social oppression.

Sharecropping became obsolete by the 1960s as the mechanization of farming equipment forced families to relocate to urban areas in search of better economic and educational opportunities. The Great Migration, 1910–70, resulted in the movement of approximately six million Black people in northern, western, and Midwestern states. Though many families moved, even more remained in the South.

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Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe captures a historically and culturally significant way of life in the rural American South as it experiences decline. Her *Daufuskie Island Series* pays homage to the island's Gullah descendants with the intent to preserve and record their unique history before widespread gentrification. Her straightforward views of daily life were to "keep for the eyes of history the way Daufuskie was."⁶

Situated at the mouth of the Savannah River in South Carolina, measuring eight square miles and only accessible by boat, the island is steeped in history



Benny Andrews (1930–2006), *Rows from Here to Eternity*, 1989 © 2024 Estate of Benny Andrews / Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY, Courtesy Michael Rosenfeld Gallery, LLC, New York, NY

⁵ Benny Andrews, "The NYPR Archive Collections – Benny Andrews," interview by Ruth Bowman, New York Public Radio, May 1, 1973, video, 4:35, <https://www.wnyc.org/story/benny-andrews/>.

⁶ Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe quoted by Alex Haley, foreword to *Daufuskie Island: Photographs by Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2007): 7.



Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe (b. 1951), *top: Union Baptist Church, 1979; bottom: Mrs. Jones leaving church with her dogs there to greet her, 1978* © Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe

with traces of human inhabitants dating back thousands of years. In the mid-1700s, large plantations were built as the production of cotton and indigo flourished. To support this thriving economy, plantation owners enslaved large numbers of individuals from central and west Africa and brought them to the island. The people Moutoussamy-Ashe photographed are the Gullah Geechee, direct descendants of the enslaved Africans who labored on the island's plantations. Their geographic isolation preserved their Gullah language and Indigenous African traditions that were passed down through generations.

Over the years, the community prospered and declined many times, with less than three hundred native residents by the 1950s. Beginning in 1978, Moutoussamy-Ashe returned several times to document the people, places, and traditions as developers purchased parcels of land to establish resort communities.

Religion and spirituality played a role in sustaining Gullah family and community on the island. Through her lens, Moutoussamy-Ashe reveals the significance of communal spaces as sites of enduring ritual, such as the First Union African Baptist Church originally built in the 1880s. Descendants of enslaved Africans were exposed to Christian religious practices and incorporated certain meaningful elements into their African-rooted belief system. The services maintained African spiritual

traditions that influenced and now remain a vibrant part of contemporary Black faith and worship.

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Maintaining a spiritual relationship with the land is a thread that connects cultures and eras. Through her *Siluetta Series* and *Esculturas Rupestres (Rupestrian Sculptures)*, Cuban-born artist **Ana Mendieta** searched for that "one universal energy which runs through everything: from insect to man, from man to spectre, from spectre to plant, from plant to galaxy."⁷ Born in Havana in 1948, Mendieta was sent by her parents at age twelve to live in Iowa under the auspices of the Catholic Church due to political upheaval. She and her sister were separated from their family and culture until they were reunited with their mother and younger brother five years later. This tumultuous experience of being uprooted and displaced informed Mendieta's exploration of identity through the landscape. She incorporates themes of feminism, nature, and spirituality through manipulations of her body in pioneering approaches to performance art, earth art, and portrait photography.

To connect with her Cuban identity, Mendieta studied Afro-Cuban rituals including Santería and visited pre-

⁷ Ana Mendieta, "A Selection of Statements and Notes," *Sulfur 22 (Spring 1988)*: 70.

ANA MENDIETA

Columbian sites in Mexico. In *Imagen de Yágul*, created in Mexico in 1973, she blends her body into the earth's surface as a symbol of earth's maternal qualities. She celebrates an understanding of the earth as feminine, which subverts the Western imposed political borders that deeply affected her youth and kept her from her homeland.

Often performative and sculptural, Mendieta made photographs of her work as seen in *Guanaroca (Esculturas Rupestres) [First Woman (Rupestres Sculptures)]*, a site-specific piece she created during her second return trip to Cuba. The series is named for Rupestrian art, a term given to graphical and sculptural works that preindustrial humans left on hillsides, scattered rocks, and the walls of caves and grottos. Mendieta visited a national park outside of Havana, once home to Native populations, where she traced and carved female forms into rock and limestone. The figures express the alignment of the earth with a maternal life-force and many were later titled with reference to Indigenous goddesses and fertility figures.

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In the twentieth century, many Western artists sought connection to their perceived origins through the study of pre-Columbian art and artifacts. The simplicity of form, expressive power, and connection to nature resonated with artists looking to expand their worldview. With increased access to Central and South America, German-born American



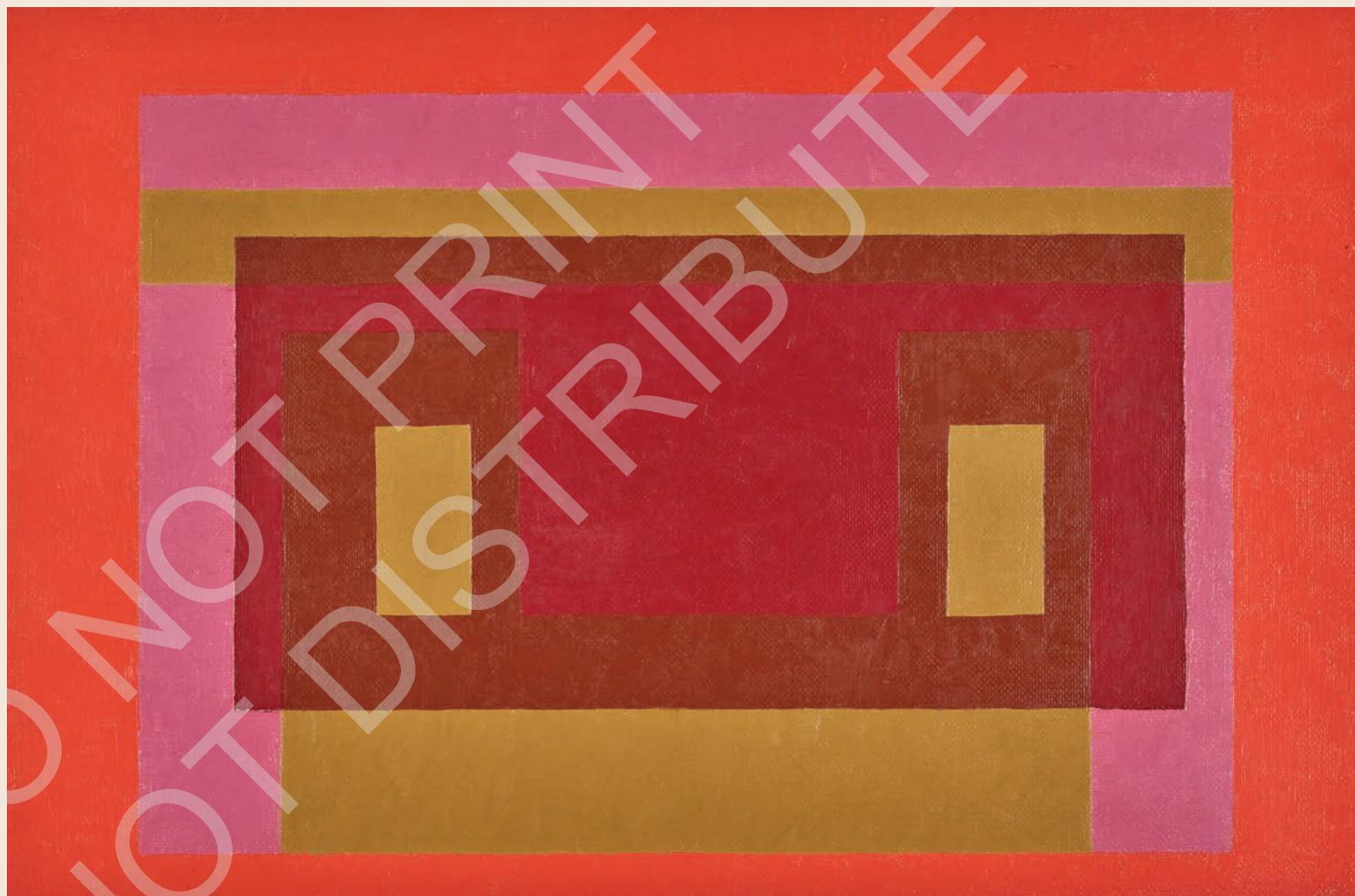
Ana Mendieta (1948–1985), *left: Guanaroca (Esculturas Rupestres) [First Woman (Rupestres Sculptures)]*, 1981; *right: Imágen de Yágul* 1973, Mexico © 2024 The Estate of Ana Mendieta Collection, LLC. Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

JOSEF ALBERS

Josef Albers first traveled to Mexico in 1935 with his wife, fellow artist Anni Albers. Together they cultivated a study collection composed of figurines, textiles, and other small artifacts that informed their eye for design and artistic philosophy. Albers wrote to a friend, "Mexico is truly the promised land of abstract art. For here it is already thousands of years old."⁸

The search for unity between life and art reflects the pedagogy of the Bauhaus, the German school to which Albers was deeply connected. By streamlining form and function, the institutional principles sought to fuse art, design, and architecture in daily life. A renowned professor, Albers taught at the Bauhaus in Weimar, Germany, before relocating to the United States because of the Nazi occupation in 1933. He spent the next sixteen years as a professor at Black Mountain College, an avant-garde liberal arts school in North Carolina, continuing his practice of creating work that is compatible and complementary to its environment.

When Albers visited Oaxaca, he saw the then-recently excavated pre-Columbian archeological site Monte Albán. He was intrigued by the strong horizontal lines of the ancient remains and synthesized color palettes of the surrounding areas. Albers returned several times



⁸ *Josef Albers to Wassily Kandinsky, August 22, 1936. The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation preserves the originals in German.*

Josef Albers (1888–1976), **Variant: Inside and Out**, 1948–53 © The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, 2024



Georgia O'Keeffe (1887–1986), **The Lawrence Tree**, 1929 © 2024 Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

to photograph the changes to the ruins as they were uncovered. The influence of his travels is evident in the abstract composition *Variant: Inside and Out*, where the painting is reduced to its essential pictorial elements allowing line and color to be the primary focus.

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To many artists, the allure of abstracted views of the natural world helped expand the concept of what constituted a landscape. Similar to Albers's travels, the American modernist **Georgia O'Keeffe** responded to fresh perspectives offered by travels to the southwestern United States. From her first visit to Taos, New Mexico, in 1929, she was deeply affected by the region's topography. Distinct from her home state of Wisconsin or her adopted home of New York City, the arid terrain boasted rolling red mountains, coniferous woodlands, and vibrant desert sunsets.

During her initial stay in Taos, O'Keeffe visited the ranch of the English author D. H. Lawrence. On the property was a Ponderosa Pine tree—a species native to the West and identifiable by its magnificent height and fragrant rust-colored bark—under which Lawrence sat and often wrote.

"I am part of the sun as my eye is part of me. That I am part of the earth my feet know perfectly, and my blood is part of the sea. My soul is an organic part of the great human race, as my spirit is part of my nation." —D. H. Lawrence, *Apocalypse and the Writings on Revelation*, 1929–30

COAST SALISH, DAN FRIDAY

As O’Keeffe laid on Lawrence’s bench, gazing up at the night sky, she paid homage to the author and his love of nature in her painting *The Lawrence Tree*. Finding continual inspiration in nature, O’Keeffe’s unique perspective of the fanning silhouette of branches breathed new life into a traditional subject.

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Extending the discussion of landscape to include nature and natural materials helps recognize many long-standing customs and traditions of cultural expression that existed well before the advent of landscape painting in the United States. The focus on materiality reveals how local, natural resources play a role in cultural memory and preservation within many Native communities. The **Coast Salish**, an ethnolinguistic group of Indigenous people in the Puget Sound watershed of present-day Washington and British Columbia, are renowned for their basketry tradition dating back more than five thousand years. They created baskets woven from grasses, barks, and reeds for purposes such as gathering materials, storage, and providing watertight forms for food preparation.

By the nineteenth century, the Coast Salish made baskets as primary trading items with European and American visitors who collected Indigenous crafts. This coiled twine basket is just one example and features a geometric pattern, or imbrication, which is often seen in Coast Salish baskets. Intricate weaving practice has

been passed down through generations and remains a significant part of many Coast Salish nations.

Contemporary glass artist **Dan Friday** (Lummi Nation) draws inspiration from his Coast Salish heritage and the skills he learned from his Aunt Fran. “Aunt Fran” was Fran James (1925–2013), born and raised in Lummi, Washington. A renowned weaver in the Pacific Northwest, she was a prolific artist and teacher, inspiring Friday and others to take up the technique. Friday commemorates Aunt Fran’s impact on their community in his series of ornately designed blown-glass baskets featuring the imbrications appearing in Coast Salish objects. By incorporating the traditional craft into his artistic practice, Friday helps maintain and honors its cultural significance.

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The painter **Tom McGrath** also recasts or reconsiders traditional forms to bring history to a contemporary practice. McGrath cites the vastness of the California landscape in views such as **Albert Bierstadt’s** *In the Yosemite Valley* as inspiration for his panoramic view of downtown Los Angeles. Though separated by nearly one hundred and fifty years, each maintains a liminal view of California and reflects an awe-inspiring vista with the power to elicit an emotional response.

The allure of the land has evolved for contemporary artists and audiences



Top: Coast Salish / WA, **Round Bowl**, c. 1900; bottom: Dan Friday (b. 1975), **Aunt Fran’s Basket**, 2019 © Dan Friday

ALBERT BIERSTADT, TOM MCGRATH

alike. Before photography, artists' depictions of the landscape were the primary source for understanding parts of the country that were unseen by most people. Bierstadt, for example, visited the American West during early expeditions and painted landscapes inspired by sketches. Often combining separate scenes into one composition, the ethereal lighting and slightly elevated vantage point created a sense of grandiosity and space dazzlingly unfamiliar to his East Coast audiences. His paintings further romanticized the West, enticing settlers to champion Manifest Destiny, the widely accepted divine notion for the United States to expand to the Pacific Coast.

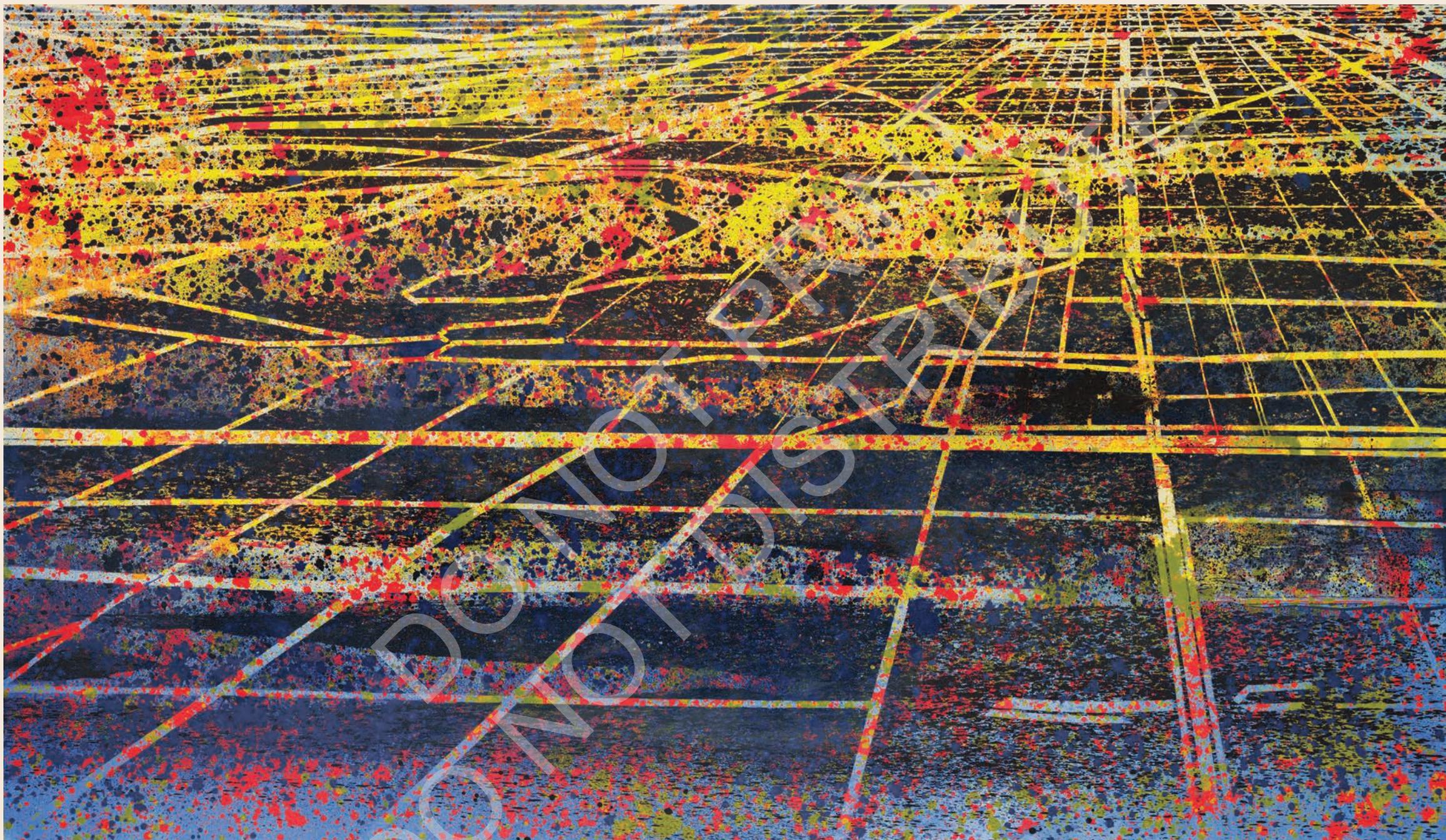
Similar to breathtaking images made by the Hudson River School artists, McGrath presents a sweeping vista of Los Angeles as seen from Mulholland Drive, transforming the city's urban sprawl into a dynamic, colorful abstraction. In present day, the road offers sublime views of the San Fernando Valley, replete with some of the most exclusive homes in the country. McGrath's urban scene of a tangled and artificial infrastructure offers a sobering look at the implications of settlement, inviting consideration of Westward expansion with a contemporary mindset.

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Bringing the conversation of settlement and landscape development into the twenty-first century, artists such as



Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902), *In the Yosemite Valley*, 1866



Tom McGrath (b. 1978), **Untitled (Yellow Grid)**, 2007 © Tom McGrath



Jacqueline Bishop (b. 1955), *After the Rain (Methane)*, 2014–15 © Jacqueline Bishop

McGrath and the painter **Jacqueline Bishop** portray overdevelopment of the landscape. Bishop's *After the Rain (Methane)* overtly critiques the overconsumption of resources wreaking havoc on our natural world. Every aspect of her painting, from the crimson waters to deformed wildlife, is intended to evidence humanity's failure to protect nature in the face of industrialization.

Bishop developed a deep concern for the environment while living in the Dominican Republic, the second largest and most diverse Caribbean country, where she witnessed the catastrophic destruction of a rainforest. She later reflected on the experience in relation to her home in southern Louisiana where the ecosystem was threatened by overdevelopment, unprecedented natural disasters, and pollution from the oil industry. Bishop explored these issues in *After the Rain (Methane)* by focusing on the impact of methane.

Though a naturally occurring greenhouse gas, methane in the Earth's atmosphere has reached unnaturally high levels because of global industrialization. The repercussions of excess methane include rising ocean levels; the painting presents a time when water consumes the land, with terrestrial wildlife forced to exist with the aquatic. The dangers of methane are paramount to Bishop's painting. The odorless and colorless gas accumulates in the atmosphere and inhibits our ability to absorb oxygen: it literally takes our breath away.

JOY HARJO

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Poet, musician, and playwright **Joy Harjo** conveys the interconnectedness of humans and nature through time. A member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, she embraces a reverence for the bond between the land and all its inhabitants. Her poem *Remember* invites us to consider the ways in which the natural world shapes who we are as individuals and communities.

• • •

Awareness of human impact on the environment and understanding a need for preservation have been throughlines in American art since the early nineteenth century. In his landscape paintings, Thomas Cole notably expressed concern for the rapid destruction of New England's forests. In the ensuing two hundred years, artists have continued to address shifting physical and cultural landscapes through their work. Through consciously including depictions of different regions of the United States, *(Un)Settled* expands beyond the historic Hudson River School to represent and challenge sectionalist views of the country. Artists convey changes in society, the built environment, and the depletion of natural resources.

The inclusion of objects made from the earth, abstract and multimedia art, and the addition of photography broadens our understanding of landscape art in favor of multiple perspectives. By offering various points of entry, this exhibition strives to recognize how

individuals are uniquely shaped by their surroundings, ultimately revealing the many ways artists have turned to the landscape to reflect on significant topics.

The conscious "unsettling" of accepted depictions of the landscape helps develop the narrative further, to underscore the importance of a more inclusive conversation. From the micro to the macro, the natural world has shaped our understanding of place and through a variety of media and makers, landscape art showcases diversity as a hallmark of American identity.

REMEMBER

Remember the sky that you were born under,
know each of the star's stories.

Remember the moon, know who she is.

Remember the sun's birth at dawn, that is the
strongest point of time. Remember sundown
and the giving away to night.

Remember your birth, how your mother struggled
to give you form and breath. You are evidence of
her life, and her mother's, and hers.

Remember your father. He is your life, also.

Remember the earth whose skin you are:
red earth, black earth, yellow earth, white earth
brown earth, we are earth.

Remember the plants, trees, animal life who all have their
tribes, their families, their histories, too. Talk to them,
listen to them. They are alive poems.

Remember the wind. Remember her voice. She knows the
origin of this universe.

Remember you are all people and all people
are you.

Remember you are this universe and this
universe is you.

Remember all is in motion, is growing, is you.

Remember language comes from this.

Remember the dance language is, that life is.

Remember.

Joy Harjo (born Muscogee [Creek] Nation, Tulsa, OK, 1951), **Remember** © 1983,
from *She Had Some Horses*, Published by W.W. Norton & Company Inc.

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST



(Un)Settled: The Landscape in American Art is arranged in five thematic sections, each presenting historic artworks in conversation with modern and contemporary examples.

The first section, *The Beaten Path*, explores the origins of the conceptual landscape as a mirror for national identity, along with early thoughts of land preservation. Broadening the idea of what constitutes the American landscape begins in *Expanding Horizons* with shifts in perspective—both literal and metaphorical—revealing the allure of discovery further afield. *Counterpoints* explores the complexities of the cultural landscape and invites conversations

about representation in American art and visual culture. *Seminatural* navigates how landscape art has since evolved to critique human-made systems and urban sprawl. The final section, *(Un)Settled*, recognizes how the landscape represents a continuum of lived experiences, reflecting on historical and cultural changes over time.

* Montgomery and Columbia only

** Mobile and Wadsworth only

Installation view, Columbia Museum of Art, 2024. Photo by Victor Johnson

THE BEATEN PATH

Washington Allston (Georgetown, SC, 1779–Cambridge, MA, 1843), *Coast Scene on the Mediterranean*, 1811, Oil on canvas, 40 x 34 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Museum Purchase with funds provided by a bequest of Dr. Robert W. Gibbes III, 1957.14

* **Benny Andrews** (Plainview, GA, 1930–New York, NY, 2006), *Untitled (Landscape with Trees)*, 1963, Oil and collage on canvas, 26 ½ x 19 ½ in., Mobile Museum of Art, Gift from the Estate of Inez B. Westerman, In Memory of Dr. David F. Sellers, P1990.03.01

** **Benny Andrews**, *Rows from Here to Eternity*, 1989, Oil and collage on paper, 33 x 25 ¼ in., Mobile Museum of Art, Gift from American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York; Hassam, Speicher, Betts & Symons Funds, G1991.03.01

* **William Christenberry** (Tuscaloosa, AL, 1936–Washington, DC, 2016), *Abandoned House, Pickinsville [sic], Alabama*, negative 1967, printed 1999, Chromogenic print on paper, 3 ¼ x 5 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Friedlander, 2004.15.1

** **William Christenberry**, *Guinea Church, near Moundville, Alabama*, negative 1972, printed 2003, Chromogenic print on paper, 3 ¼ x 5 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Friedlander, 2004.15.8

* **William Christenberry**, *House with Flag, Greensboro, Alabama*, negative 1977, printed 2003, Chromogenic print on

paper, 3 ¾ x 4 7/8 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Friedlander, 2004.15.9

* **William Christenberry**, *Store with Signs, Greensboro, Alabama*, negative 1975, printed 1995, Chromogenic print on paper, 3 ½ x 4 7/8 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Friedlander, 2004.15.12

** **William Christenberry**, *T.B. Hicks' Store, Newbern, Alabama*, negative 1973, printed 1996, Chromogenic print on paper, 3 ½ x 4 7/8 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Friedlander, 2004.15.13

** **William Christenberry**, *Tenant House, near Havana, Alabama*, negative 1961, printed 2002, Chromogenic print on paper, 3 ¼ x 5 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Friedlander, 2004.15.14

Thomas Cole (Bolton le Moors, England, 1802–Catskill, NY, 1848), *View in the White Mountains*, 1827, Oil on canvas, 25 ¾ x 35 ¾ in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Bequest of Daniel Wadsworth, 1848.17

* **William Dunlap** (Born Webster County, MS, 1944), *Late Rock Light*, 1984, Oil paint, ink, and dry pigment on paper, 36 ½ x 51 ½ in., Mobile Museum of Art, Gift of Ed McGowin, G1993.15.03

** **William Dunlap**, *Storm Light*, 1985, Oil paint, ink, and dry pigment on paper, 53 x 29 in., Mobile Museum of Art, Gift of Ed McGowin, G1993.15.02

* **Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe** (Born Chicago, IL, 1951), *Oxcart and Driver*, 1979, Gelatin silver print, 8 7/8 x 13 1/4 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe, 1985.4.37

** **Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe**, *Jake with his boat arriving on Daufuskie's shore*, 1978, 8 7/8 x 13 1/4 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe, 1985.4.38

Andrew Wyeth (Chadds Ford Township, PA, 1917–2009), *Northern Point*, 1950, Tempera on gesso panel, 36 x 18 1/4 in., The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection Fund, Endowed by Kathryn and John P. Britton, 1950.603

Unidentified maker, American, Connecticut, *Plate*, 19th century, Glazed

EXPANDING HORIZONS

Josef Albers (Bottrop, Germany, 1888–New Haven, CT, 1976), *Variant: Inside and Out*, 1948–53, Oil on composition board, 17 5/8 x 26 5/8 in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection Fund, 1953.213

* **Fidelia Bridges** (Salem, MA, 1834–Canaan, CT, 1923), *Canaan Mountains and Blackberry River*, 1880, Watercolor on paper, 13 7/8 x 9 7/8 in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Gift of Dorothy Clark Archibald, 1999.16.11

** **Fidelia Bridges**, *Summer Song*, 1874, Watercolor and gouache on paper, 13 5/8 x 9 5/8 in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of

redware and orange slip, 11 in. (diameter), Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, The Albert Hastings Pitkin Collection, Gift of Mrs. Albert Hastings Pitkin in memory of her husband, 1918.1261

Unidentified maker, American, Norwalk, CT, *Bread Tray*, 19th century, Redware, 11 3/4 x 7 3/4 in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, The Albert Hastings Pitkin Collection, Gift of Mrs. Albert Hastings Pitkin in memory of her husband, 1918.1306

Unidentified maker, American, Plymouth, MA, *Three-panel chest*, 1645–75, White and red oak, white pine, 27 1/2 x 47 3/8 x 21 7/8 in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Wallace Nutting Collection, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1926.295

Art, Purchased through the gift of Charles A. Goodwin, 1986.64

Frederic Church (Hartford, CT, 1826–New York, NY, 1900), *Mountains of Ecuador*, 1855, Oil on canvas, 24 3/8 x 36 5/8 in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Bequest of Mrs. Clara Hinton Gould, 1948.177

Dan Friday (Born Lummi Nation, WA, 1975), *Aunt Fran's Basket*, 2019, Blown glass, 14 x 14 in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Purchased through the gift of the family of Leta Marks in her honor, 2023.17.1

Marsden Hartley (Lewiston, ME, 1877–Ellsworth, ME, 1943), *Earth Warming*,

1932, Oil on paperboard, 25 1/4 x 33 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, The Blount Collection, 1989.2.15

Sven August Knute Heldner (Vederslöv, Sweden, 1875–New Orleans, LA, 1952), *Untitled*, c. 1940–50, Oil on canvas, 39 1/2 x 33 1/2 in., Mobile Museum of Art, Gift from the Collection of Charles D. Zucker, G1991.22.09

Georgia O'Keeffe (Prairie, WI, 1887–Santa Fe, NM, 1986), *The Lawrence Tree*, 1929, Oil on canvas, 31 x 40 in., Wadsworth

Atheneum Museum of Art, The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection Fund, 1981.23

Mark Peiser (Born Chicago, IL, 1938), *Untitled*, 1976, Handblown glass with torched/worked imagery, 7 1/2 x 6 1/2 in., Mobile Museum of Art, Gift from the Art Patrons League, G76.26.01

Coast Salish, WA, *Round Bowl*, c. 1900, Twine, 4 x 8 1/2 in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Bequest of Mrs. Constance S. Mead, 1918.759

COUNTERPOINTS

Sara Ayers (Catawba, Rock Hill, SC, 1919–Columbia, SC, 2002), *Wedding Vase*, 1980, Pit-fired earthenware, 7 5/8 x 5 3/4 x 3 3/8 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Margaret O. Hemingway, 2010.8.1

Roger Brown (Hamilton, AL, 1941–Atlanta, GA, 1997), *Celebration of the Uncultivated—A Garden of the Wild*, 1980, Oil on canvas, 60 x 120 1/4 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts Association Purchase, 1981.8

Robert S. Duncanson (Fayette, NY, 1821–Detroit, MI, 1872), *Silver River, North Carolina*, 1863, Oil on canvas, 14 1/2 x 28 1/8 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Bruce and Susan Lueck, 2016.13

Georgia Henrietta Harris (Catawba, Lancaster County, SC, 1905–Dallas, GA, 1997), *Bowl with Effigy Heads*, c. 1973, Pit-fired earthenware, 6 1/2 x 10 1/2 x 6 3/4 in.,

Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Georgia Henrietta Harris, 2001.14

* **Ana Mendieta** (Havana, Cuba, 1948–New York, NY, 1985), *Guanaroca (Esculturas Rupestres) [First Woman (Rupestres Sculptures)]*, 1981/1994, Black and white photograph, ed. 3/3, 53 1/8 x 39 7/8 in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Contemporary Art Purchase Fund, 1998.12.10

** **Ana Mendieta**, *Untitled: Silueta Series, Mexico/ From Silueta Works in Mexico, 1973–1977*, 1973/1991, Color photograph, ed. 18/20, 20 x 13 1/4 in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Contemporary Art Purchase Fund, 1998.12.5

* **Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe** (Born Chicago, IL, 1951), *Mrs. Jones leaving church with her dogs there to greet her*, 1978, Gelatin silver print, 8 7/8 x 13 1/4 in.,

Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe, 1985.4.3

* **Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe**, *The Bride, The Groom, and Their Guests*, 1979, Gelatin silver print, 8 7/8 x 13 1/4 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe, 1985.4.14

** **Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe**, *Union Baptist Church*, 1979, Gelatin silver print, 8 7/8 x 13 1/4 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe, 1985.4.19

SEMINATURAL

Albert Bierstadt (Solingen, Germany, 1830–New York, NY, 1902), *In the Yosemite Valley*, 1866, Oil on canvas, 35 1/8 x 50 in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Elizabeth Hart Jarvis Colt Collection, 1905.22

Tom McGrath (Born New Milford, CT, 1978), *Untitled (Yellow Grid)*, 2007, Oil on canvas, 56 x 96 in., Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Gift of Jean Crutchfield and Robert Hobbs in honor of Susan Talbott, Director and CEO, 2011.29.1

Jane Peiser (St. Louis, MO, 1933–Penland, NC, 2022), *Untitled*, 1974, Ceramic, millefiori salt glaze, 22 1/8 x 9 1/8 x 8 3/4 in., Mobile Museum of Art, Gift of Tut and Harry Riddick, G2009.12.01

* **Ed Ruscha** (Born Omaha, NE, 1937), *Melrose/Market*, 2001, From the portfolio, *Los Francisco San Angeles*, Color etching on paper, 4 x 5 1/2 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, 2001.7.1

** **Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe**, *After church service gathering*, 1979, Gelatin silver print, 8 7/8 x 13 1/4 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe, 1985.4.20

Arzada Sanders (Catawba, York County, SC, 1896–1989), *Gypsy Pot with Serpent*, 1973, Pit-fired earthenware, 6 1/2 x 6 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Arzada Sanders, 1974.256

* **Ed Ruscha**, *Columbus/Sunset*, 2001, From the portfolio, *Los Francisco San Angeles*, Color etching on paper, 4 x 5 1/2 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, 2001.7.2

* **Ed Ruscha**, *Highland/Hyde*, 2001, From the portfolio, *Los Francisco San Angeles*, Color etching on paper, 4 x 5 1/2 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, 2001.7.3

** **Ed Ruscha**, *La Brea/Powell*, 2001, From the portfolio, *Los Francisco San Angeles*, Color etching on paper, 4 x 5 1/2 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, 2001.7.4

** **Ed Ruscha**, *Sunset/Pierce*, 2001, From the portfolio, *Los Francisco San Angeles*, Color etching on paper, 4 x 5 1/2 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, 2001.7.5

** **Ed Ruscha**, *Wilshire/Grant*, 2001, From the portfolio, *Los Francisco San Angeles*, Color etching on paper, 4 x 5 1/2 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, 2001.7.6

(UN)SETTLED

Jacqueline Bishop (Born Long Beach, CA, 1955), *After the Rain (Methane)*, 2014–15, Oil on linen, 54 x 65 1/2 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts Association Purchase, 2018.7

Beverly Buchanan (Varina, NC, 1940–Ann Arbor, MI, 2015), *Frank Owen's Blue Shack*, 1989, Painted wood, 17 x 8 x 11 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Museum purchase, Richard Samuel Roberts Minority Artists Purchase Fund, 1991.7

* **William Christenberry** (Tuscaloosa, AL, 1936–Washington, DC, 2016), *Bread-of-Life, near Tuscaloosa, Alabama*, 2001, Chromogenic print on paper, 3 1/2 x 5 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Friedlander, 2004.15.2

* **William Christenberry**, *Grave, Stewart, Alabama*, negative 1962, printed 1996, Chromogenic print on paper, 3 1/4 x 3 3/8 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Friedlander, 2004.15.5

** **William Christenberry**, *Grave, Stewart, Alabama (Windy Day)*, negative 1964, printed 2003, Chromogenic print on paper, 3 1/4 x 3 1/8 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Friedlander, 2004.15.6

** **William Christenberry**, *Ruin, Stewart, Alabama*, 2001, Chromogenic print on paper, 3 1/2 x 5 1/8 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Friedlander, 2004.15.11

Henry François Farny (Ribeauvillé, France, 1847–Cincinnati, OH, 1916), *Indian Encampment*, 1911, Oil on canvas, 22 3/8 x 32 1/4 in., Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of the Ida Belle Young Art Acquisition Fund, 2021.3

Jeffrey Gibson (Born Mississippi Band of Choctaw and Cherokee, Colorado Springs, CO, 1972), *Migration*, 2016, Acrylic and graphite on canvas, 70 x 57 1/8 in., Art Bridges, AB.2017.15

** **Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe** (Born Chicago, IL, 1951), *The Old Prayer House After Hurricane David*, September 1979, Gelatin silver print, 12 3/8 x 9 3/4 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe, 1985.4.5

** **Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe**, *The Old Prayer House Before Hurricane David*, April 1978, Gelatin silver print, 8 7/8 x 13 1/4 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe, 1985.4.17

* **Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe**, *View of the Old Winery from the Road*, 1980, Gelatin silver print, 8 7/8 x 13 1/4 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe, 1985.4.31

* **Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe**, *Silver Dew Winery*, 1978, Gelatin silver print, 12 3/8 x 9 3/4 in., Columbia Museum of Art, Gift of Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe, 1985.4.32



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(Un)Settled identity, exhibitions, and collateral design by Kstudio/Christiaan Kuypers, Melanie Ide

Edited by Lisa Kosan

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Back cover: Jacqueline Bishop (b. 1955), **After the Rain (Methane)**, 2014–15 (detail) © Jacqueline Bishop

