



2019–20 Exhibition Tour

Chadron State College

August 30–September 30, 2019

Sponsored by the Chadron State College Galaxy Series

Prairie Arts Center, North Platte

October 2–October 29, 2019

Sponsored by NebraskaLand National Bank, Mike Jacobson, president and CEO, and the Art Study League of North Platte

Museum of the High Plains, McCook

October 31–December 2, 2019

Sponsored by the McCook Arts Council

Gallery 92 West, Fremont

January 8–February 3, 2020

Sponsored by the Fremont Area Art Association

Dawson County Historical Society Museum

February 5–March 2, 2020

Sponsored by the Lexington Community Foundation

Cornerstone Bank, York

March 4–30, 2020

Sponsored by Cornerstone Bank

Stalder Gallery, Falls City Library and Arts Center

April 1–27, 2020

Sponsored by the Richardson County Arts and Humanities Council

Beatrice Public Library

April 29–May 25, 2020

Sponsored by the Beatrice Public Library Foundation

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From Where I Stand

Sheldon Statewide Exhibition
2019–20



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Sheldon Statewide is an annual exhibition and outreach program of Sheldon Museum of Art at the University of Nebraska. As part of a land-grant research institution, Sheldon shares the university's mission of extending its offerings across the state. Since the program began in 1987, original artworks from Sheldon's collection have been viewed by more than 360,000 people in twenty-five Nebraska communities.

Sheldon Statewide 2019–20 is made possible by generous support of Farmers Mutual Insurance of Nebraska, Rhonda Seacrest, Nebraska Arts Council and Nebraska Cultural Endowment, and Sheldon Art Association.

Educator resources for *From Where I Stand* are available at sheldonartmuseum.org/statewide.

For more information about Sheldon Statewide, contact Abby Groth, assistant curator of public programs, at 402-472-7858 or agroth@unl.edu.



Thomas Doney and George Caleb Bingham, *The Jolly Flatboatmen*, 1847

The thirty-second annual Sheldon Statewide exhibition, *From Where I Stand*, presents works by fourteen diverse artists who explore the relationships people have with the places they inhabit. Instead of relegating the landscape to serve as a mere background for their compositions, these artists treat it as a significant component of their work. Landscape becomes a means to investigate national identity, work and leisure customs, social justice, and personal narratives. In doing so, this installation highlights myriad ways in which an individual may react or respond to their environment and provides opportunities to consider the complex, and often-fraught, connection between humanity and the landscape.

The oldest works in this exhibition are prints made after famous paintings: *The Jolly Flatboatmen* (1847) by Thomas Doney after George Caleb Bingham, and *The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak* (1869) by Albert Bierstadt. Created for mass distribution and aimed at an East Coast audience, the prints were used as propaganda justifying Manifest Destiny and promoting the attraction of westward expansion in the mid-nineteenth century. The print after Bingham's



Albert Bierstadt, *The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak*, 1869

painting presents flatboatmen as jovial, clean-cut men dancing and relaxing as they venture down the Missouri River at a moment when this kind of flatboat had been replaced by steamboats that were capable of moving goods more efficiently. Albert Bierstadt's landscape does not feature explorers, but rather a community of Shoshone Indians encamped on the banks of a lake at the foot of the majestic Rocky Mountains. This type of imagery promoted an idealized idea of the West, a peaceful, idyllic Eden

available for colonization. Neither image acknowledges the forced removal of Native Americans from their lands, the people of color who provided much of the labor in building the railroads that criss-crossed the country, or the damage done to the environment in the name of exploration. While these works would have originally advocated that white settlers were destined by God to claim the land, today they provoke a more critical look at the immense cost of staking national identity in unbridled expansion.

Cover
John Divola, *N34°11.965'W115°54.308'* (detail), 1995–1998/2011

Back
Margo Humphrey, *Louisiana, LOUISIANA!* (detail), 2006

As the United States acquired new territories expanding its domain from coast to coast, homesteaders put down roots. Cultivating the land not only provided people and livestock with necessary sustenance, but it also generated deep and lasting connections between them and the environment. Paul Burlin's *Furrowed Fields* pictures two farmers carefully inspecting and drawing aside the soil to prepare it for planting. They will sow each seed with the hope for successful harvest, an outcome dependent on both their diligence and the good fortune of nature. When nature wreaks havoc, however, the consequences can be devastating. In the 1930s, severe drought exacerbated flawed farming techniques— now known as the Dust Bowl—and forced 300,000 farmers from their land across the Great Plains. Arthur Rothstein's *Dust Storm, Cimarron County, Oklahoma* shows a man and his children against the backdrop of a landscape destroyed during this period. Burlin and Rothstein both place the human figure at the center of the landscape, communicating an indefatigable commitment required to work the land.

While many artists use landscapes to record a specific place or comment upon history, others leverage landscape to make pointed social or political statements. Using a well-known landscape to create an imagined meeting between significant historical figures, Faith Ringgold's *The Sunflower Quilting Bee at Arles* is set in the sunflower fields of Arles, France. Alluding to the absence of people of color in the canon of European art, Ringgold depicts a group of famous African American women in the town where Vincent Van Gogh painted his well-known sunflower canvases. The women—including Madam C. J. Walker, Sojourner Truth, Ida B. Wells, Fannie Lou Hammer, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Mary McLeod Bethune, and Ella Baker—surround a quilt

with a bold sunflower pattern. Ringgold places Van Gogh behind the women, and gives him a bouquet to bear in honor of the women's accomplishments. In this landscape, the women and their work are presented as equal to European artistic masters, with the quilt they hold serving as a symbol of their collective achievements and Ringgold's recognition of their "dedication to change the world."

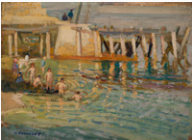
While Ringgold's landscape merges fantasy and reality, Amy Cutler's *Astrid* takes place within a landscape entirely of her own invention. A young woman stands in a forest, where birdhouses and purses hang from the branches of slender trees. She too holds a birdcage, in effect mirroring her surroundings. Unlike the houses and bags above her that appear to be empty, the woman's cage holds a single brown bird lying on the floor. She stares off into a space that Cutler has seemingly left unfinished and void. In this almost dream-like environment, Cutler infuses the landscape with enigmatic meaning, leaving the viewer to draw his or her own associations between the woman's story and her surreal surroundings.

People will always have important relationships with the spaces they inhabit. Whether they look to the land in anticipation of a bountiful harvest, to deliver aesthetic inspiration, or to provide outlets for work or leisure, the ties between people and their surroundings are inextricable. As you look at the works of art in this exhibition, consider your own relationship to your environment. How do your surroundings—whether rural or urban, natural or man-made—impact you? And, how do your actions affect the landscape? Offering a variety of perspectives, *From Where I Stand* seeks to explore these relationships and the significance of the places in which we play, work, and live.



Amy Cutler, *Astrid*, 2005

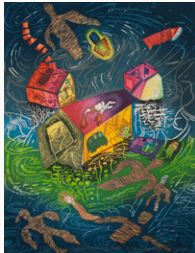
Works in the Exhibition



Arthur J. Beaumont
Bradford, England 1877–Staten Island, NY 1956
Bathers at the Pier
Oil on board, date unknown
10 x 13¹⁵/₁₆ inches
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, gift of Carl and Jane Rohman through the University of Nebraska Foundation, U-5572.2009



Harry Callahan
Detroit, MI 1912–Atlanta, GA 1999
Eleanor, Chicago
Gelatin silver print, 1949; printed 1965
9⁵/₈ x 9¹/₂ inches
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Anna R. and Frank M. Hall Charitable Trust, H-1044.1965



Margo Humphrey
born Oakland, CA 1942
Louisiana, LOUISIANA!
Color reduction woodcut, 2006
26⁷/₁₆ x 20¹/₄ inches
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, gift of the artist and the Under Pressure Print Club, U-5484.2007



Faith Ringgold
born New York, NY 1930
The Sunflower Quilting Bee at Arles
Lithograph on white Rives BFK paper, 1996
22¹/₁₆ x 30¹/₁₆ inches
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, H. Y. Thomson Fund, U-4965.1998



Albert Bierstadt
Solingen, Germany 1830–New York, NY 1902
The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak
Chromolithograph, 1869
25¹/₄ x 34 inches
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Mercedes A. Augustine Acquisition Trust, U-4418.1992



Amy Cutler
born Poughkeepsie, NY 1974
Astrid
Gouache on paper, 2005
11¹/₄ x 11¹/₄ inches
Nebraska Art Association, purchased with donations from the Sheldon Forum, N-835.2006



Ana Mendieta
Havana, Cuba 1948–New York, NY 1985
Untitled (Mendieta draped in fabric, Cuilapán Church, Oaxaca, Mexico)
Black and white print, circa 1973
9¹/₄ x 6¹/₄ inches
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Robert E. Schweser and Fern Beardsley Schweser Acquisition Fund, through the University of Nebraska Foundation, U-5366.2004



Arthur Rothstein
New York, NY 1915–New Rochelle, NY 1985
Dust Storm, Cimarron County, Oklahoma
Gelatin silver print, 1936; printed 1981
19¹/₁₆ x 19 inches
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Anna R. and Frank M. Hall Charitable Trust, H-2761.1986



Thomas Doney
born France, active New York 1844–49
after George Caleb Bingham
Augusta County, VA 1811–Kansas City, MO 1879
The Jolly Flatboatmen
Engraving and aquatint with etching, 1847
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Olga N. Sheldon Acquisition Trust, U-4271.1990



John Divola
born Los Angeles, CA 1949
N34°11.965'W115°54.308'
Archival pigment print on fiber paper, 1995–1998/2011
20 x 24 inches
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Olga N. Sheldon Acquisition Trust, U-6497.2015



Wright Morris
Central City, NE 1910–Mill Valley, CA 1998
Uncle Harry, Entering Barn (from *The Home Place, near Norfolk, Nebraska*)
Gelatin silver print, 1947
10 x 8 inches
Nebraska Art Association, purchased with the aid of funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, N-454.1977



Paul Strand
New York, NY 1890–Orgeval, France 1976
Wall Street
Platinum palladium print, 1915; printed 1984
10¹/₄ x 12¹/₁₆ inches
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, gift of Michael E. Hoffman, U-4457.1991



Paul Burlin
New York, NY 1886–New York, NY 1969
Furrowed Fields
Oil on canvas, 1915
27 x 35⁵/₈ inches
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Howard S. Wilson Memorial, U-459.1965



Aaron Douglas
Topeka, KS 1899–Nashville, TN 1979
Bravado, Defiance, Flight, and Surrender (from the *Emperor Jones* series)
Woodcut, 1926
8 x 5⁵/₈ inches
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Olga N. Sheldon Acquisition Trust, U-5512.3.2008