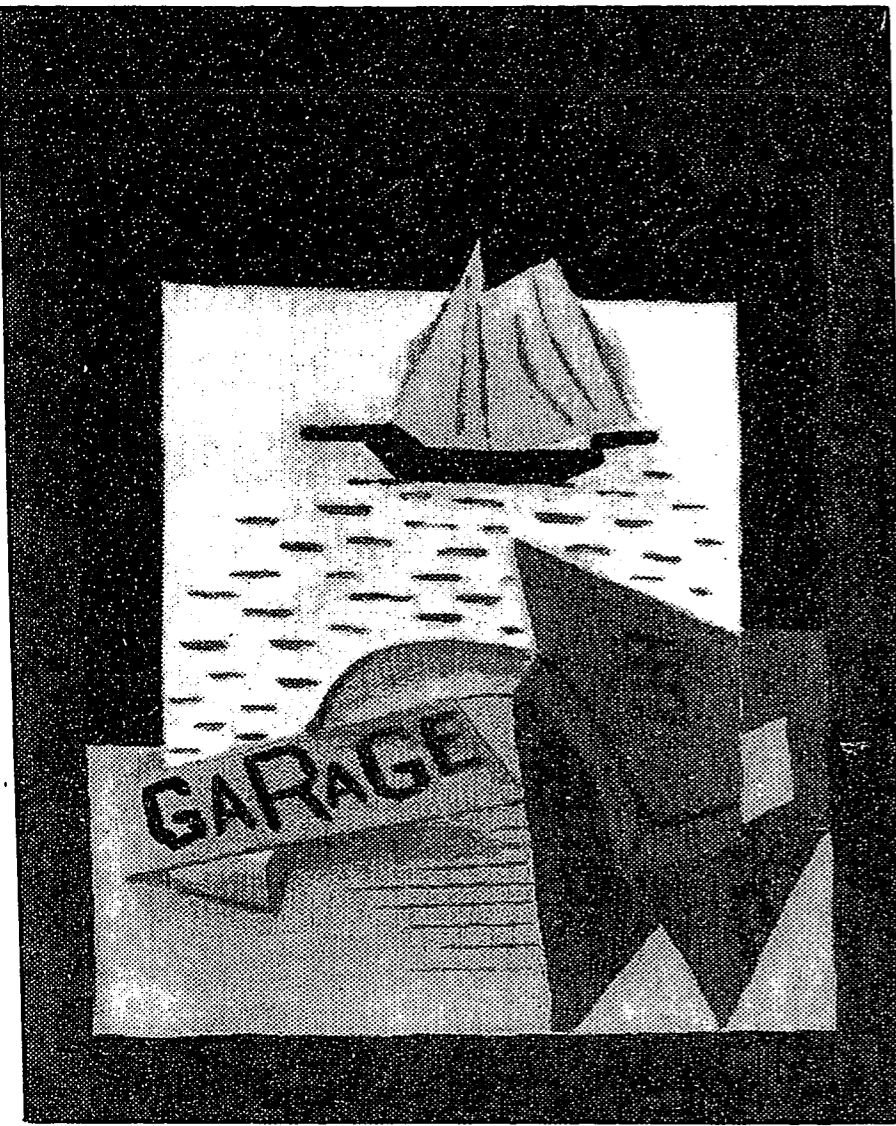


# Art: From Gloucester, The Bypassed Haven



Stuart Davis's "Schooner and Garage" is in Gloucester show at Borgenicht.

By HILTON KRAMER

**A**BOUT certain subjects even the most studiously objective and fair-minded of critics cannot be expected to write with complete detachment. Some element of personal piety or loyalty is bound to insinuate itself into the discussion, and all you can do in such circumstances — unless you decide to avoid such subjects altogether — is to make a declaration of your interests and leave it to the reader to make allowances for the inevitable bias.

This is what I am now obliged to do in attempting to assess the exhibition called "The Gloucester Years," which opens tomorrow at the Grace Borgenicht Gallery, 724 Fifth Avenue, at 57th Street (through March 4). "The Gloucester Years," organized by Curt Marcus, takes as its theme the beautiful, seaside town of Gloucester, Mass., which was once a place that attracted a great many gifted American painters. (It also attracted a great many terrible painters, too — but that is another story.) Now it happens that Gloucester, which is on Cape Ann, some 35 miles north of Boston, was the place where I was born and raised and where I first succumbed to the lure of art.

There are people, of course, who harbor a lifelong hatred for the small towns of their childhood — and with ample reason, I suppose — but I have never been one of them. Gloucester has remained a tender and affectionate memory, both for itself and for the happy initiation into the life of art that it once offered. It will be readily seen, then, that an exhibition devoted to paintings of this subject is likely to exert a special appeal.

This being the case, it is altogether a mercy that the show that Mr. Marcus has mounted at Borgenicht's is, in fact, a very fine one. He has made it an easy show to love, to be sure, by concentrating on the work of five distinguished figures who painted in Gloucester during the earlier decades of the 20th century: Milton Avery, Stuart Davis, Marsden Hartley, Edward Hopper and John Sloan. In some 50-odd paintings, drawings and watercolors, produced from around 1916 to well into the 1940's, we are taken on an enchanting tour of the motifs that painters were especially drawn to in Cape Ann — the harbor, the fishing boats, the quarries, the old houses and back streets and the whole picturesque townscape.

For none but Davis, I suppose, did Gloucester ever represent anything more than a pleasant summer retreat that allowed painters to carry on their work in agreeable circumstances. Davis had family connections in Gloucester and knew the place in winter as well as summer. Yet in the work of all of these painters there is a very emphatic sense of place in the pictures they produced there.

The Davis pictures provide the only real revelations, however, for the earlier ones focus on the Expressionist phase of the painter's development (roughly from 1916 to the early 20's). Later on, when Davis moved into the Cubist idiom that is more familiar to us, he continued to draw upon Gloucester motifs — and this work, too, is well represented in the show. But the Expressionist paintings, with their echoes of van Gogh and Matisse, give us a glimpse of a younger, less experienced but very passionate artist intent upon capturing the spirit of a place and its people.

The paintings by Hartley and Avery, on the other hand, are far more consistent in their mastery. Hartley's "Blueberry Highway, Dogtown" (circa 1931) is one of the painter's best paintings of the bleak Dogtown Common motif that was his favorite Gloucester subject, and a still life called "New England Sea View — Fish House" (1934) anticipates some of the strength and melancholy that Hartley brought to the Maine paintings of his final years. For Avery, it was clearly the light — especially the light of the

swimming quarries and the harbor — that exerted a special appeal. In several of the paintings in this show, Avery's handling of the milky gray-and-green light of Cape Ann acquires a luminosity and intensity that other painters would find hard to equal with the brightest colors. And as is often the case with Avery, he added a fine note of humor to his pure pictorial elegance.

There is a good deal of this same gray-green light, too, in the work of the two Realists in the exhibition, Hopper and Sloan. Sloan's paintings do not, in my view, quite come up to the level set here by Davis, Hartley and Avery. His Gloucester paintings are surely better than the common run of pictures produced there, but they are nonetheless the type of brushy seaside water pictures that were always produced in the local summer art colony in great numbers. Hopper, on the other hand, strikes his own distinctive note, as he usually does. A watercolor called "Universalist Church, Gloucester" (1926) is certainly vintage Hopper.

Gloucester, alas, never quite made it as a fashionable art resort after the 1930's. For reasons that have never been explained, it lost out to Provincetown, and you rarely, if ever, hear of Gloucester in a serious art connection nowadays. Its place on the margin of American art history is secure, however, and "The Gloucester Years" offers — and not only, I trust, to an extantive — a very pleasurable and instructive glimpse of what it once meant to some of our best artists.

Other exhibitions this week include: **Craig Kauffman** (Blum Helman, 20 West 57th Street): Craig Kauffman's new paintings, while ostensibly derived from the theme of the interior still life — a venerable subject in Western painting — address the eye primarily as abstract compositions. The manner employed in this work might best be described as late, or neo, Abstract Expressionism. The divisions of the picture surface are firmly under the control of line — to such a degree, indeed, that many of these pictures look like studies for improbable stained-glass windows — but color is applied in the familiar brushy manner of the Abstract Expressionists.

What is most appealing in these paintings is the quality of light in them. One is indeed left with an impression of the way a certain kind of light filters into a certain kind of studio interior. Yet the pictorial energy is so circumspect and the taste so unadventurous and "correct," that the emotional impulse we associate with a genuine Expressionist impulse never makes itself felt. This is another case of taste triumphing over expression. (Through Feb. 13.)

**Maud Morgan** (Parsons, 24 West 57th Street): Color that is at once gorgeous and subtle, textures that look good enough to eat, forms that are simple in conception but often complicated in their realization — these are some of the more appealing attributes to be observed in Maud Morgan's new paper collages. These are works that easily fit into the tradition of abstract color painting, but they re-enact some of the more eye-seducing strategies of this tradition without ever touching brush to paper. Instead, it is through the juxtaposition of paper forms on paper grounds that the artist achieves her beguiling effects. (Through Feb. 13.)

### Miss McPartland Plays

The jazz pianist Marian McPartland will appear Sunday night at 8 at the Y.M.-Y.W.H.A. of Metropolitan New Jersey, 760 Northfield Avenue, in West Orange. Accompanying Miss McPartland on bass will be Steve LaSpina. Tickets are \$10 (\$8 for students and the elderly). Information: (201) 736-3200.

REMEMBER THE NEEDIEST!

Museums Galleries

## WINTER ART SHOWCASE

Exhibitions Auctions

### CHARLES ROSEN

(1878-1950)

Modernist Paintings from 1918-1930

Through February 27

**Salander O'Reilly Galleries, Inc.**  
22 East 80 New York  
Tel: 212 879-6606  
Monday-Saturday, 10 to 5:30

### American Figurative Expressionism 1950-1960

GANDY BRADIE  
WILLIAM DE ROONING  
LEON GOLUB  
JOHN GRAHAM  
STEPHEN GREENE  
GRACE HARTIGAN  
LESTER JOHNSON  
ALEX KATZ  
JAN MULLER  
NATHAN OLIVERA  
LARRY RIVERS  
AND OTHERS

marilyn pear gallery  
79 WEST 57TH

### Sara Roszak

Jan 26-Feb 13

Marisa del Re Gallery  
41 E. 57 NYC 688-1843

### GERALD K. GEERLINGS

Rare Prints, Early States and Study Drawings  
CIRCA 1927-1933  
Martin SUMERS Graphics  
50 W 57

**RONIN GALLERY**  
605 Madison Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10022  
212 688-0188

**Winter Landscapes**  
18th thru 20th century woodblock prints by Utamaro Koryu  
**LAST 2 DAYS**  
Kuniyada, Yoshitoshi, Hasui, Yoshida, Azechi and Saito.  
Color publication and poster brochure \$2.00

**RONIN GALLERY** 605 Madison Ave., N.Y.C.  
\$18.00 above color poster (18"x24")  
\$2 poster brochure. N.Y.S. add sales tax.

MALI AFRICA  
NIGERIA  
IVORY COAST  
CONGO

**EXHIBITION: IMPORTANT AFRICAN ART**  
**PACE PRIMITIVE**  
32 EAST 57 NEW YORK

4th Annual Exhibition  
**AMERICAN MARINE PAINTINGS**  
32 page illustrated catalogue, ten dollars.  
**Smith Gallery**  
1045 Madison Avenue, New York 10021  
Mon.-Sat. 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. (212) 744-6171

**FANNY SANIN**  
February 2-20  
**PHOENIX**  
30 W. 57 NYC

**AKIRA ARITA**  
Jan. 12-Feb. 6  
**Staempfli**  
47 E. 77, N.Y.C.



## Lewis Carroll and Alice invite you to attend.

Once we shared their magical world in "Alice in Wonderland." Now, in celebration of the 150th birthday of Lewis Carroll, we can share their real world in an engaging exhibition at the Morgan Library of photographs and drawings, poems and puzzles, priceless manuscripts and delightful handwritten notes. Their families and friends will all be there in photographs and memorabilia as well as, of course, the White Rabbit, Mad Hatter and Cheshire Cat in the famed Tenniel drawings. Come and meet the real Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (or Lewis Carroll, if you prefer) and the real Alice Liddell who charmed him then and charms us still.

The Pierpont Morgan Library  
29 East 36th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016  
January 28 to April 18, 1982

Tuesday thru Saturday 10:30-5 pm. Sunday, 1-5 pm. Closed Monday

Sponsored by

### Philip Morris Incorporated

It takes art to make a company great.

Makers of Marlboro, Benson & Hedges 100's, Merit, Parliament Lights, Virginia Slims and Cambridge: Miller High Life Beer, Lite Beer and Löwenbräu Special and Dark Special Beer: 7UP and Diet 7UP.



**PEARL**  
WORLD'S LARGEST ART & CRAFT DISCOUNT CENTER

Daler "English" Papers Pads, etc. 50% off list  
Pioneer Drafting Tables 29"x42" list 169.95 Pearl 115.00  
X-Acto Professional Graphic Artist Set list 29.95 Pearl 17.97  
Faber Castell 4, 7, and 9 piece technical pen sets 50% off list  
Italian Painting Knives High Selection, Closeout 50-75% off list  
Prices may vary at other locations.  
Write or call for FREE professional mail order catalog.  
New York Store open Sundays 11:00 AM to 4:45 PM

Store Hours: 9-5:30 Mon.-Sat.  
We Accept Visa and Master Charge  
306 CANAL STREET, NEW YORK CITY  
Other Locations: EAST MEADOW, L.I. PARAMUS, N.J. FT. LAUDERDALE, FLA.  
(212) 431-7932

**Charles Cowles Gallery**

Jean-Pierre Pincemin  
Through February 27

Patrick Ireland  
Through February 20

420 West Broadway 925-3500

**Isabel McIlvain**  
Recent Sculpture  
Through February 24th

**Robert Schoelkopf Gallery**  
825 Madison Avenue, New York 10021

**BERNARD LORJOU**  
Private collector wishes to sell to another private collector Lorjou canvases 71"x35". Best offer, 212-477-1122 or 212-OR3-8769 Georges Gilbert 7-9AM or after 6pm Principals only

**WALTER TITTLE**  
(1883-1966)  
Jan. 26 - Feb. 13  
The Marbella Gallery  
28 East 72nd St.  
NYC. 212-288-7809

Southwest Paintings

**PAUL BRACH**  
**JOHN FARNSWORTH**  
**JAUNE QUICK-TO-SEE SMITH**

Through February 23rd

Monday - Saturday  
from 10 am to 6 pm  
Thursday from 10 to 8:30 pm

*The Adam L. Simbel*  
*Gallery of Contemporary Art*  
*at Saks Fifth Avenue*

15 E. 49th St. (212) 940-4176

**Judy Rifka**  
February 5-March 6

**Brooke Alexander, Inc.**  
20 West 57th New York 212/757-3721

**Here, saving money is the real art.**

Discover savings of up to 50% off list prices on everything in art supplies in our 11th floor Warehouse Store.

**Eastern Artists**  
352 Park Ave. South (bet. 25th & 26th St.)  
11th floor 212-725-5555