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## Artscene. July-December 2015

Chazen Museum of Art

Madison, Wisconsin: Chazen Museum of Art, July-December 2015

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July–December 2015

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# French artists caught the wave.

Katsushika Hokusai (Japanese, 1760–1849), *Behind the Wave off Kanagawa* (*The Great Wave*), from the series *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji*, 1830–1835, color woodcut, 10 3/4 x 15 in., bequest of John H. Van Vleck, 1980.2386

## *Print Tsunami: Japonisme and Paris*

July 3–August 23, 2015

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Chazen Museum of Art

July–December 2015

# artscene





FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:  
Faisal Abdu'Allah and the  
Squad Collective, 2015  
photographs on Hahnemuhle  
paper, each 116 ½ x 60 in.

*Gilgamesh*  
*"Mosgaadace," Lead*  
*Hummingbird from the Sky*  
*Dr. Detritus*

*Phantom*  
*Shamash*  
*Polaris*  
*Athena II*

*Rameses XII*  
*Ishtar*  
*Nemesis*  
*Heracles*

*Squad: The Calling of the  
Common Hero, Photography  
by Faisal Abdu'Allah*

July 24–September 27, 2015

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## Roger Ballen Photography

September 4–November 1, 2015



Roger Ballen  
(b. 1950 in New  
York, active in  
South Africa),  
*Muscleman and  
Ninja*, 2012,  
photograph,  
11 x 13 3/4, courtesy  
Roger Ballen



things are not  
what they first appear

*Xu Bing, Background Story:  
A New Approach to  
Landscape Painting*

October 16, 2015–January 10, 2016



Xu Bing (Chinese, b. 1955), *Background Story: Dwelling in Fuchun Mountains, (front view)*  
2014, light box and natural debris, 4 x 78 ¾ ft., (glass panel only), installation view at  
Inside-Out Art Museum, Beijing, 2014, courtesy of Xu Bing Studio

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Chazen Museum of Art

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# A new *imaginary* architectural world

Richard Haas (American, b. 1936) *Mural Model, Right Hemisphere, Private Residence, Madison, Wisconsin, 1986*, gouache, watercolor, pencil, and pen on plastic, 6 1/2 x 13 1/2 x 7 in., IR2015.14.19

## Richard Haas: *The Madison Project*

November 13, 2015–January 10, 2016

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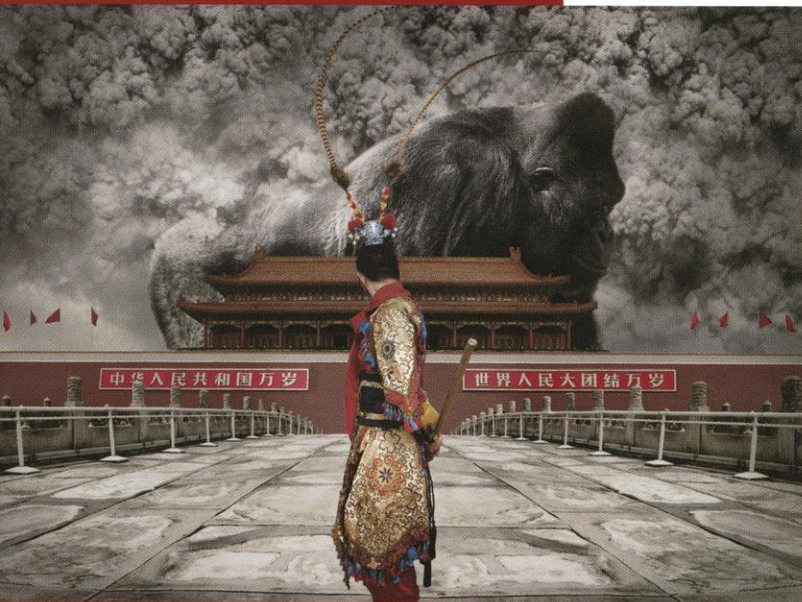


Chazen Museum of Art

July–December 2015

# artscene





Chi Peng (Chinese, b. 1981),  
*Now-ing*, 2011, chromogenic  
 print, 69 x 92 in., 2014.44

# dear friends,



When our new building opened in October 2011, I described one of its galleries as a display space for twenty-first century international art.

This was a direct response to my experience with contemporary art. Going to New York galleries starting in the late 1990s, I was struck by the fact there was no longer a single line of aesthetic development. Instead every artist and every dealer was following his or her own direction. A gallery featuring contemporary African art was to be found right next door to a gallery featuring contemporary American art, which in turn, was next to a gallery of contemporary Chinese art, and so forth. And it became obvious to the visitor that excellent work was to be found all over the world.

The Chazen responded by acquiring such wonderful works as, for example, *Danu* (2006) by the Ghanaian artist El Anatsui, *Ten Thousand Trees* (2004) by the Chinese artist Xu Bing, and *Your House* (2006) by the Danish artist Olafur Eliasson. These works, unfortunately, remained in storage until the Twenty-first Century Gallery in the new building provided a home and a context for this stimulating development in the appreciation of contemporary art.

In a university museum, the existence of a twenty-first century international gallery soon raises questions about how its contents can be enriched and expanded in accordance with the intellectual needs and cultural interests of its various constituents. It is here that temporary exhibitions become not only interesting in their own right but also can serve as a valuable collection-building tool. A case in point is the recent exhibition *Innovation and Tradition: The Human Figure in Contemporary Chinese Art*.

Thanks to the gracious assistance of Xu Bing, an artist with whom the Chazen has had a long relationship and who now serves as the vice president of the Central Academy of Fine Art (CAFA) in Beijing, I was able to visit numerous artists' studios in that city in the summer of 2012. From the one thousand or so photographs of art works that resulted from that trip, emerged a selection of approximately sixty. This group was further refined to the twenty-six objects included in the Chazen's exhibition. Finally a small number of objects will remain in Madison as part of our permanent collection when the exhibition closes. The selection of the seven Chinese objects discussed in another part of *Artscene* was based on a long process of looking and looking again, of comparing one object with another, and then looking yet again, until the final decision was made. As always, the eyes have it.

Russell Panczenko, Director  
 Chazen Museum of Art

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## Print Tsunami: Japonisme and Paris

July 3–August 23

Leslie and Johanna Garfield Galleries

## Squad: The Calling of the Common Hero, Photography by Faisal Abdu'Allah

July 24–September 27

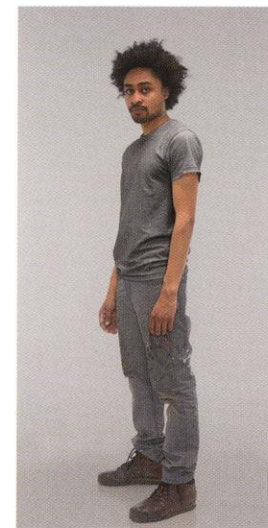
Pleasant T. Rowland Galleries

# Exhibitions

With the opening of Japan in the 1850s, Japanese art became more readily available to Europeans, and in France it sparked *Japonisme*. For most Parisians, Japonisme was no more than a fad, but for printmakers, the influx of Japanese art—Japanese prints in particular—was a bombshell. Henri-Gustave Jossot's *The Wave* (1894) humorously expresses the effect of Japanese prints, showing an artist along with his easel and canvas being swept overboard by a *Japoniste* wave. Jossot no doubt refers to Hokusai's famous print *The Great Wave* (1830–1835). French printmakers were inspired by these images. Their response to Japanese prints ran the gamut from outright copying to quite subtle assimilation. Drawing from the Chazen's collection, this exhibition compares the works of French printmakers to the Japanese prints that inspired them.

*Squad: The Calling of the Common Hero*, conceived by Faisal Abdu'Allah, Assistant Professor, Art Department, and developed collaboratively with UW–Madison student curators, extends themes that Abdu'Allah explored in his 2007 London show *Goldfinger*, and his 2010 project *Ten Degrees (Adeve)* created while a visiting professor at Stanford University.

For this show, Abdu'Allah has created eleven larger-than-life photographic portraits of *Squad* members, which critique the concept and visage of the superhero, by humanizing it and opening up the figure of the archetype. Smaller portraits created using human hair accompany the *Squad* portraits, and *The Last Supper I* and *The Last Supper II* (1996), which were re-created in 2011 as photo-realist tapestries, will be shown here for the first time in the United States.



Faisal Abdu'Allah and the Squad Collective, *Gilgamesh*, 2015, photograph on Hahnemühle paper, 116 ½ x 60 in.





n<sup>o</sup> 14 jossot

Henri-Gustave Jossot (French, 1866–1951),  
*The Wave*, 1894, lithograph, 24 x 13 7/8 in.  
John H. Van Vleck Endowment Fund  
purchase, 1999.81



# Roger Ballen Photography

September 4–November 1

*Leslie and Johanna Garfield Galleries*

Roger Ballen is one of the most original image makers of the twenty-first century. This exhibition features recent black-and-white photographs from *Asylum of the Birds* (2014, Thames & Hudson) and *I Fink U Freeky* (2013, Prestel), photographed at a compound near Johannesburg. The location of the “asylum” remains a tightly guarded secret, but Ballen says its inhabitants include refugees, escaped prisoners and mental patients, drifters who come and go, and women with children who have no other place to stay. The images are orchestrated by Ballen with stage sets of graffiti, drawings, animals dead and alive, random scraps and found objects, and are populated (sort of) by the human and avian inhabitants. The resulting images are intriguing and disturbing. The images from *I Fink U Freeky* were created in collaboration with—and feature—the South African punk rap group Die Antwoord.

Ballen is an American who has lived and worked in South Africa since the 1970s. These images continue his exploration of marginal communities, work that began when his job as a geologist took him out to the countryside and through small, isolated South African towns where he began photographing the people he found there.

The exhibition includes thirty-two photographs, two short films: *Asylum of the Birds* and *Roger Ballen's Outland* directed by Ben Crossman, along with Die Antwoord's music video *I Fink U Freeky*.

Roger Ballen (b. 1950 in New York, active in South Africa), *Take Off*, 2012, photograph, 35 7/16 x 35 7/16, courtesy Roger Ballen







*Xu Bing,  
Background Story:  
A New Approach to  
Landscape Painting*

October 16, 2015–January 10, 2016

*Pleasant T. Rowland Galleries*

In 1991, Xu Bing held his first exhibition in the United States, at the Elvehjem (now the Chazen) Museum of Art. Since that time, Xu Bing has become one of the world's best-known artists. On October 16, he returns to Madison with *Xu Bing, Background Story: A New Approach to Landscape Painting*. The length of the larger Pleasant T. Rowland Gallery will host what appears to be a traditional Chinese ink painting on eighty feet of rice paper. Students of traditional Chinese art may recognize it as a version of the often-copied *Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains* by Huang Gongwang (1269–1354), one of the Four Yuan Masters. From the Ming and Qing dynasties up to the Republican era, important artists all made copies of this masterwork, or are recorded as having done so.

As is often the case with Xu Bing, the artwork is not what it first appears to be.

Instead of rice paper, a light box stretches through the gallery. On one side is the tribute to *Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains*. On the other side, the light box is open, revealing thousands of LED lights and the dried grasses, plastic bags, sticks, rocks, tape, and all manner of detritus that cast the shadows and create the shapes that depict the “painting” on the other side. The exhibition will include an interactive station where visitors can try their hand at turning bits and scraps of ordinary materials into an inspirational image.





Xu Bing (Chinese, b. 1955), *Background Story: Dwelling in Fuchun Mountains*, (rear view) 2014, light box and natural debris, 4 x 78  $\frac{3}{4}$  ft., (glass panel only), installation view at Inside-Out Art Museum, Beijing, 2014, courtesy of Xu Bing Studio



## *Richard Haas: The Madison Project*

November 13, 2015–January 10, 2016

*Leslie and Johanna Garfield Galleries*

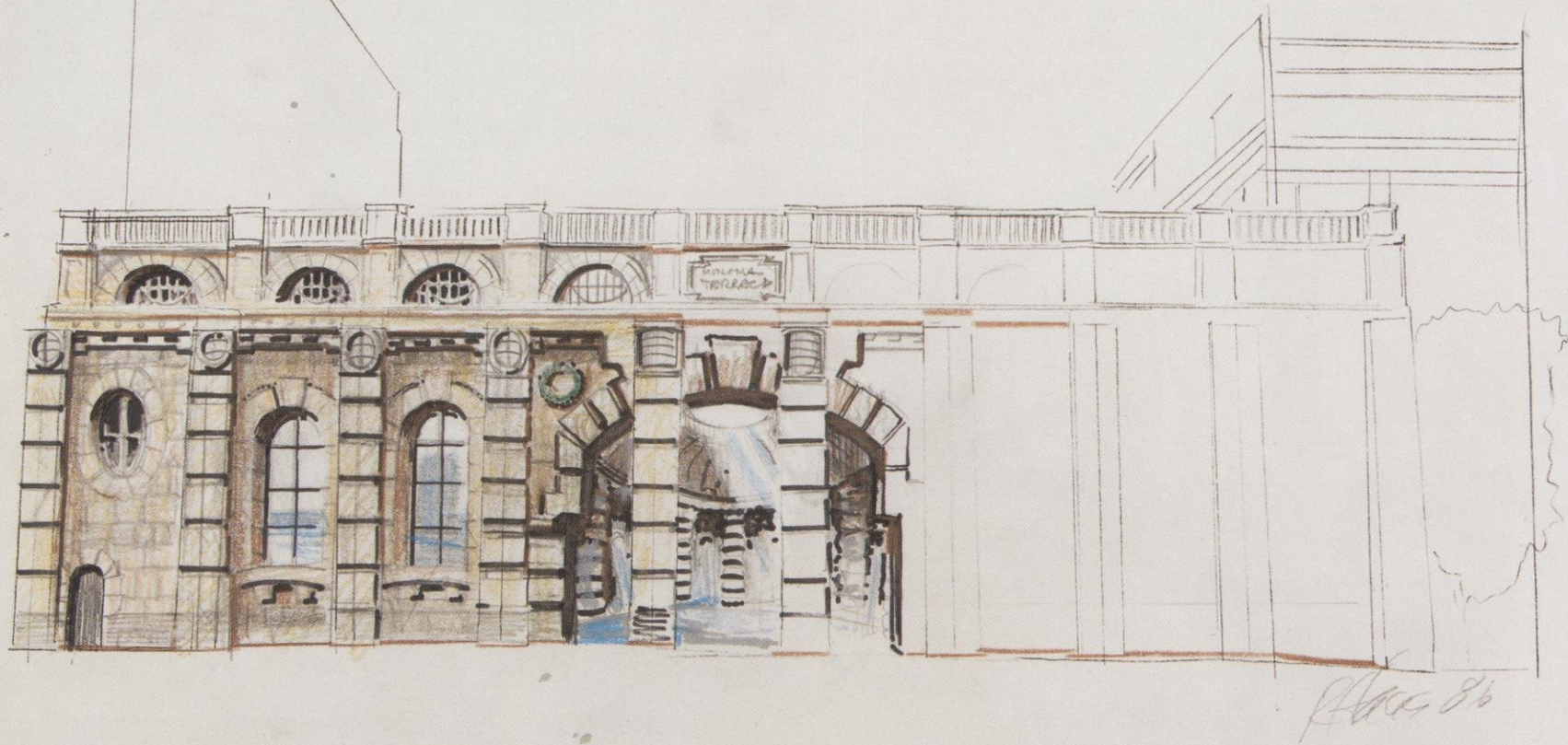
Spring Green, Wisconsin, native Richard Haas first made his name in the 1970s in New York. His murals covered blank urban walls with appealing trompe l'oeil painting that created the illusion of three-dimensional architecture. Hundreds of buildings throughout the United States are the beneficiaries of his imagined architectural world. The Chazen exhibition features original presentation drawings from two Madison commissions: the Olin Terrace mural and a private residence ceiling mural (now on view at the Madison Children's Museum), which comprise a gift from Haas to the Museum.

In 1985, Madison commissioned Haas to create an outdoor mural for the city. Haas chose the Olin Terrace as the site for his work because it was the site of the three-time rejected proposal for the controversial Frank Lloyd Wright-designed convention center, which he (and many others) believed would never be built. In the mural, Haas shows the reflection of Wright's convention center in the painted windows. A version of the Wright design, Monona Terrace Convention Center, was finally built in 1995 and now obscures the mural.

The ceiling mural painted in 1986 for the entrance of a Madison residence was moved to the Madison Children's Museum in 2012. The presentation drawings for this mural illustrate Wisconsin scenes such as Taliesin, Wisconsin Dells, University of Wisconsin's "Red Gym," and a Wisconsin farm.

Richard Haas (American, b. 1936), *Partial Preliminary Study in Pencil, The Olin Terrace, Madison, Wisconsin*, 1986, graphite, color, pencil, and marker on paper, 16 ¼ x 10 in., IR2015.14.16











# Xu Bing: *An Interactive Story*

Xu Bing first came to Madison in 1990 just after the political unrest in China that culminated in the happenings of Tiananmen Square. His drawings were so impressive that Director Russell Panczenko immediately asked if he would agree to an exhibition of his work at the Chazen, then called the Elvehjem. *Three Installations by Xu Bing*, which opened in November of 1991 was the first exhibition of his work in the West. In 2004, the Chazen organized a second exhibition of Xu Bing's work exploring how it had changed under the influences of the United States and Europe. Subsequently, Xu Bing has risen to be one of the most important contemporary Chinese artists in the world, and, although he still maintains a studio in Brooklyn, he has returned to China where he serves as the vice president of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing.

In the fall of 2015, Xu Bing will return to the Chazen with *Xu Bing, Background Story: A New Approach to Landscape Painting*, which will be on view from October 16, 2015 through January 10, 2016. Unlike the previous two exhibitions, the artist will not ship a finished work of art to Madison. Instead, he will come with a concept and bring only the raw ingredients that he will use to create it. Furthermore, these materials will not be canvases, rice paper, colors and brushes, as one would expect, instead they will be dried plants, plastic bags, cardboard tubes, and, most importantly, hundreds of LED lights. The landscape will be created *in situ* largely through the arrangement of lights and shadows.

The 80-foot landscape called *Background Story: Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains*, which was shown in Beijing in the summer of 2014, is a recreation of a well-known Chinese masterpiece by Huang Gongwang (1269–1354), one of the Four Yuan Masters. On entering the gallery, the visitor will be able to walk the length of the 80-foot landscape to appreciate rich details of mountains, lakes, rivers, and trees of various kinds depicted on its extended surface. They, together with the nuanced atmospheric conditions that envelop them, are beautifully and convincingly rendered. However, it soon will become apparent that the artwork, which at first appears to be a traditional ink painting executed on rice paper, is, in reality, a series of complex overlapping shadows cast on frosted glass. The work of art is in fact a giant lightbox.

Chazen visitors will be invited to “look behind the curtain” as both the front and the back of the artwork will be on view. There the trees, mountains, rivers, and lakes are revealed to be created by the interplay of light and shadow with ordinary objects—debris, really—like dried plants, crumpled paper, stones, sticks, and plastic bags. Here Xu Bing will once again show the viewer that things are not what they first appear to be.

The exhibition will include an interactive component, a large lightbox with an array of the same components that the artist will use to create his landscape. Visitors will be able to attempt to emulate Xu Bing's masterful technique and see what they can create using light and shadow cast by ordinary objects.

These demonstration light boxes show how a plastic bag becomes a graceful fish, how palm fronds become tall pines, and how husks become mountains.





Su Xiping (Chinese, b. 1960), *Busy People No. 1*,  
2010, oil on canvas, 98 1/5 x 98 1/2, 2015.8

# Contemporary

When the groundbreaking *Tradition and Innovation: The Human Figure in Contemporary Chinese Art* closes on July 5, and the paintings, drawings, sculpture, and video from the leading artists of China are packed into their enormous crates to be shipped back across the Pacific Ocean, seven of these stunning artworks will be staying in Madison to become part of the Chazen's permanent collection. These acquisitions are more than just business transactions; they represent several years of forging relationships and building trust across very different cultures.



# Chinese Works to Stay in Wisconsin

Su Xinping, *Busy People No. 1* (2010)

“Think of a young person charging out of an MBA program to be a success and retire at age 40,” says Chazen Director Russell Panczenko. “According to discussions with the artist, that’s what this image of a person in a hurry represents.” The monumental painting—it measures over 8 by 8 feet—has been adopted by Asian art magazines as an emblem of the current Chinese art scene itself: dynamic, forward driven, in a hurry. Chinese artists are excited to have doors to the West opening, and are eager to dash through. But even if a viewer knows nothing about China, it is a powerful composition and audiences can react to it purely as a painting.

When Panczenko first saw the painting in 2012 he asked the artist if he would consider selling *Busy People No. 1* to the Chazen. But Su Xinping demurred. “For a lot of Chinese artists, selling an artwork to the West means that it is lost to them,” says Panczenko. Su Xinping has one other painting in an American collection, at the San Francisco Museum of Fine Art. Acquisition of this painting provides an extraordinary opportunity for the

students and faculty of the University as well as the citizens of Wisconsin to experience and study an artwork by an extremely influential Chinese artist.

Xiang Jing, “*Are a Hundred Playing You? Or Only One?*” (2007)

Panczenko first was drawn to Xiang Jing’s *Mortals—Endless Tower* (2011) when he visited her studio in 2012, and set about to try to acquire it. He was intrigued by the artist’s deliberate riff on Brancusi’s famous *Endless Column*, first conceived in 1918 as a symbol of the infinite sacrifice of Romanian soldiers in WWI. However, Xiang Jing’s column obviously differs from Brancusi’s in that her module is the human body, not an abstract geometric shape, but both suggest that the units might be endlessly piled one atop the other.

On his return to Beijing in 2014, Panczenko saw “*Are a Hundred Playing You? Or Only One?*” (2007), and had to make a difficult decision. “*Are a Hundred Playing You* is so much richer in terms of inspiration it provides the viewer. It offers multiple avenues for thought and discussion—for example, Chinese society and culture, the role of women, human psychology,” says Panczenko. “Considering

that we are a university museum, our collections must be responsive to as wide a variety of disciplines and approaches as possible.”

Two photographs and three drawings will also join the Chazen’s permanent collection as a result of the exhibition. *Mood Is Never Better Than Memory—February* (2010) and *Now-ing* (2011) are by Chi Peng, a young photographer who is perhaps China’s only prominent openly gay artist. In addition there are three small sketches by Geng Xue, which depict scenes from her stop-motion film *Mr. Sea* (2014).

“Now we can provide students and community members with outstanding examples of the top art in contemporary China,” says Panczenko. “Contemporary Chinese art and culture can no longer be something we learn about second or third hand, but something we can experience for ourselves. Providing this direct experience of other times and other cultures is at the very heart of the Chazen’s mission.”



# The *Depth* and *Breadth* of a Collector's Generosity

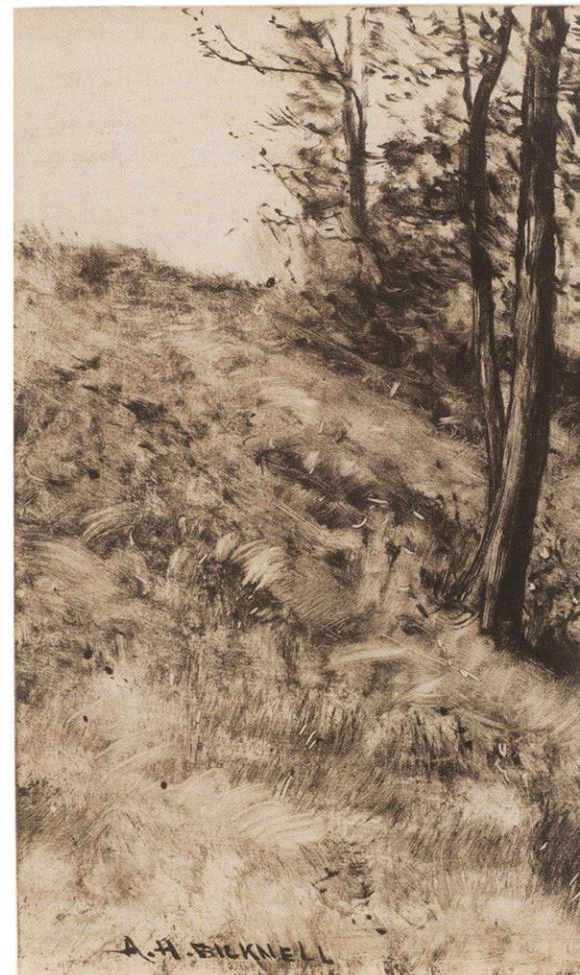
The Baker/Pisano Collection is a rich and varied group of works collected by University of Wisconsin alumnus D. Frederick Baker '59, and his partner Ronald G. Pisano (1948–2000). As authorities on William Merritt Chase, his students, and the artists of his milieu, Baker and Pisano collected deeply in the field of American art. The Chazen is extraordinarily fortunate that Baker has chosen his alma mater as a recipient of his generosity. The works he has donated have remarkably broadened the collections of the Chazen Museum. Among Baker's first donations were a pair of drawings by Chase; the first in the Chazen's collection by the important American artist.

In 2012, a year of celebratory exhibitions following the opening of the museum's expansion, Baker's largesse was on view in *Fixed Images: Photographs from the Baker/Pisano Collection*, drawn from the hundred-and-one photographs he donated that year. The gift gave a depth to the museum's photography collection, adding works by artists Man Ray, Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Steichen, Paul Strand, Diane Arbus, and Robert Mapplethorpe, some of whom were not previously represented in the museum. However, the wide range of the Baker gift, which included nineteenth and early-twentieth-century

photographs, made the exhibition the first historical overview of photography at the Chazen. The gift of these works provides future generations of students access to milestone works in this important medium.

Another exhibition was also the result of a substantial donation. *American Monotypes from the Baker/Pisano Collection* was shown in 2014 (and its accompanying catalogue can be viewed online through the Chazen website). Twenty of the monotypes in the exhibition stayed on at the Chazen as a gift to the permanent collection, establishing another area of strength that documents the history of monotypes in America. The monotype was particularly popular in the United States starting at the end of the nineteenth century.

Most recently, the Chazen received another Baker/Pisano gift, which included works by such important American artists as Gifford Beal, George Innes, Elihu Vedder, and Joseph Stella. The donation gives the collection still greater depth and breadth in American art during the century when the country invented itself as a world power politically as well as culturally. Baker's donations will help visitors understand the interconnections between artists and the country's desire for a uniquely American art.





Albion Harris Bicknell (American, 1837–1915),  
*Landscape with Boat*, n.d., monotype, 10 <sup>10</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 17 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in., IR2014.23



## Valuable Support

To carry out its mission, the Chazen Museum of Art depends on the valuable support of individuals, businesses, and private foundations, as well as government grants and funds from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

The following individuals and organizations deserve special recognition for their recent support of Chazen Museum of Art programs and exhibitions from October 2014–March 2015.

*Leslie and Johanna Garfield*

*Ann and Reed Coleman*

*Simona and Jerome Chazen*

*Ruth DeYoung Kohler*

*Regina Millner*

*Helen Burish*

*Frederic E. Mohs, Jr.*

*Duane Hendrickson*

*Beth Kubly*

*Marie Wunsch*

*Alan Silverman*

*Maxine Triff*

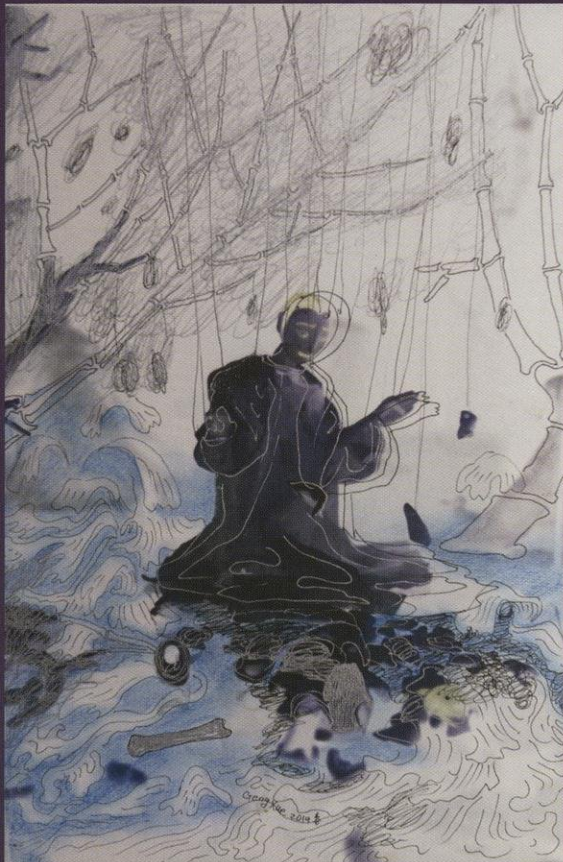
*Barry and Debbi Berman*

*Dianne Greenley and Carol Ziesemer*

*Laura Simon*

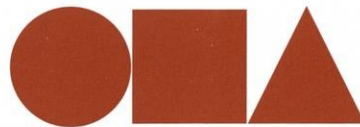






ABOVE: Geng Xue (Chinese, b. 1983), *Fragment of Depths*, 2014, black and silver ink on inkjet print, mounted to wood, 15 ¾ x 7 ⅞ in., 2015.1

COVER: Roger Ballen (b. 1950 in New York, active in South Africa), *Bitten*, 2004, photograph, 31 ½ x 31 ½ in., courtesy Roger Ballen



## Chazen Museum of Art

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