Homer Boss: the figure and the land.

Boss, Homer, 1882-1956
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HOMER BOSS

THE FIGURE AND THE LAND

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HOMER BOSS
AN INDEPENDENT ARTIST

ESSAY BY SUSAN S. UDELL

Elvehjem Museum of Art
University of Wisconsin–Madison
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1994

Homer Boss: The Figure and the Land
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On the cover: Homer Boss (American, 1882–1956), *Young Woman in Black*, 1910, oil on canvas, 74 x 36 in., Elvehjem Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Jon G. Udell in memory of Suzanne and Homer Boss, 1978.18

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FOREWORD

The thirty portraits and landscapes by Homer Boss which comprise this exhibition and the accompanying catalogue are intended to focus critical attention on this little known but interesting artist who studied with William Merritt Chase and Robert Henri. Boss is not only worthy of attention because of his accomplishments as a painter but also for the influence he exerted on many important American artists through his teaching at the Independent School of Art and the Art Students League in New York City.

This exhibition benefits from the heretofore unpublished research of Susan S. Udell, Boss's niece who inherited his archives. Using these little-known records of his painting, teaching, and exhibiting history and supplementing them with archival research and with oral histories gathered from Boss's students and family, Dr. Udell has written the first biography of this interesting artist, which the Elvehjem is proud to publish in this catalogue.

The paintings presented in this exhibition were selected by the Elvehjem's curator of collections Leslie Ann Blacksberg. Dr. Blacksberg reviewed works by Boss in private and public collections and chose those she considered to be the most representative examples of his varied career and which reflected major developments in American art during the first half of this century.

Other members of the museum staff also contributed to the success of this project. Our preparator Jerl Richmond gave careful consideration to the works and their best presentation; registrar Lucille Stiger supervised loan agreements, packing the works for travel, and photographing the works for the catalogue; curator of education Anne Lambert gathered materials and arranged for the training of docents in preparation for giving tours; Museum Shop manager Liese Pfeifer selected books and items for the shop to provide visitors with additional information on Boss and his contemporaries and the New Mexico painters; and our membership and development specialist Rebecca Garrity organized a convivial and festive opening reception. The assistant director for administration Corinne Magnonni was in charge of financial planning, and Lori Demeuse was responsible for keeping the accounts and paying the bills in a timely and efficient manner. Last, but only to emphasize the importance of her contribution, I would like to acknowledge our editor Patricia Powell who diligently gathered and then edited the information for the present catalogue and worked with the media for publicity for the exhibition.

On behalf of the museum, I also wish to thank University Publications art director Earl Madden for his design and editor Linda Kietzer for coordinating production of the catalogue. We are also grateful to Greg Anderson for his skill and care in photographing the works for this catalogue.

Our highest praise, however, is reserved for Susan S. Udell for establishing a credible biography and a catalogue raisonné for Homer Boss. We are pleased to be able to bring her research to fruition in this Elvehjem publication.

Finally, I wish to express the museum's gratitude to those anonymous and named individuals and institutions who generously lent works: Mr. and Mrs. H. Earl Hoover II; Hunter Museum of Art, Chattanooga, Tennessee; Madison Art Center, Madison,Wisconsin; Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, New Mexico; Mrs. Peter J. Smykla; Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla, Jr.; and Mr. and Mrs. Jon G. Udell.

Russell Panczenko, Director
Elvehjem Museum of Art
May 1994

AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The desire for privacy sometimes precludes others from sharing in the beauty and compositional harmonies created by artists who paint to satisfy inner expressive needs rather than to please the public. Such an artist was Homer Boss (1882–1956), who painted in New York and New Mexico during the first half of this century. Only after Suzanne, his wife and my aunt, died in 1976 did we become aware of the contributions Uncle Homer had made to art in America. Their adobe home contained a multitude of paintings and a scrapbook of newspaper and magazine articles that prompted me to research Homer Boss's life. It was not an easy task, for, aside from entering various exhibitions, this quiet, dignified artist and teacher had made few attempts to further his reputation. With the help of resources at the Kohler Art Library of the University of Wisconsin–Madison I pursued all information that even remotely pertained to Boss. The subsequent support of other researchers of this period such as Bennard B. Perlman, William Innes Homer, and Clark Marlor was most encouraging. I am very grateful for their assistance.

The biography was originally written between 1976 and 1979 and has been revised over the past year for publication in this catalogue. What I initially perceived as a brief biography was multiplied several times over because of the recollections of students and exhibition reviews that gave credence to Boss's stature in the art world. With gratitude I acknowledge the generous recollections of several persons who have passed on without seeing the fruition of their tributes, especially my aunt—Anne Kutka McCosh, and other students and friends of Homer—Carol Mead Klonis, Stewart Klonis, Helen Hodgskin, and Emil Holzhauer. In addition, Mildred Baker, Charlotte Blackmer, Hester Jones, Charlotte Leal, Clara McPherson Reiss, and Robert Reiss contributed memories of the Bosses.

I am also indebted to relatives of Homer who have shared information: Pearl Roewe, Edith Baxter, Col. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla, Sylvia and Peter J. Smykla, Jr., and Dorothea Kutka Rudge.

Archival records were obtained with the assistance of Christiane C. Collins (Parsons School of Design), Linda S. Ferber (The Brooklyn Museum), Everett Raymond Kinstler (National Arts Club), Garnett McCoy (Archives of American Art, Washington, D.C.), Catherine Stover (Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts), and Erin Younger (The Heard Museum). My thanks to them and all others who responded to my enquiries.

Dr. and Mrs. Paulo Otto procured information from Brazil about Boss's Independent School of Art. Their help, as well as that of Professor Mary Lou Daniel of the University of Wisconsin–Madison who translated the information, is much appreciated.

Many years ago Professor Emeritus James Watrous of the University of Wisconsin–Madison art history faculty made suggestions for reworking the biography. In 1981 Professor Jane Peters of the University of Kentucky-Lexington art history faculty carefully critiqued the revision. The biography is enriched by their expertise. I also appreciate the patience of Patricia Powell, editor for the Elvehjem Museum. In addition I want to thank Russell Panczenko, director, and Leslie Ann Blacksberg, curator, of the Elvehjem Museum, for arranging this exhibition.

Above all, I am indebted to my late aunt Suzanne Kutka Boss for cataloging and notating what she could of Homer's paintings. His portraits and landscapes speak eloquently for this independent, unassuming man, and we are pleased that some of his works can be shared in this exhibition.

Susan S. Udell
Madison, Wisconsin
April 1994

HOMER BOSS
An Independent Artist

By Susan S. Udell

The Early Years with Chase and Henri

Born in Blandford, Massachusetts, on July 9, 1882, Homer Dean Boss was the oldest child of Homer Carlton Boss and Jane Cecilia Murray Boss. At an early age, he was fond of sketching and showed promise of a future in art. The family moved to Springfield, Massachusetts in the mid 1890s, where the young man worked as a die-setter for Moore Drop Forge. Then, intent on following a career in art, he moved on to New York City at the turn of the century.[1]

Although we know little of his earliest years in New York, we do know he studied at the New York School of Art, unofficially known as the Chase School after its founder and guiding spirit, William Merritt Chase (1849–1916).[2] Boss studied first with Chase and then with Robert Henri (1865–1929), who joined the faculty in 1902. Chase and Henri were opposites in both manner and philosophy; Chase stressed delicacy of detail and visual accuracy while Henri encouraged emotional spontaneity and broad brushwork to reveal the model's temperament. These approaches nourished Boss's talent and developed techniques that he used throughout his life.

William Merritt Chase believed that an artist must first learn the technical side of painting before indulging in the joy of the creative spirit. Sensitive to the nuances of color, he used it sparingly with small touches where it attracted much more attention than the quantity warranted. Generally, his colors were rather quiet: blacks, low-toned whites, a touch of red, or a bit of smokey violet. However, his teaching allowed individuals to develop their own talents, for he refrained from criticisms that would make the students slavish imitators of his style.[3] This free manner of teaching was one which Homer Boss later emulated and received praise for in his own teaching career. Chase was particularly fond of such old masters as Hals and Velázquez—whose work also influenced the palette of Homer Boss.

Robert Henri, advocating "art for *life's* sake," encouraged his pupils to see and record the nobility in the human spirit.[4] To interest the students in topics outside the world of studio art, he often made philosophical comments drawn from his wide acquaintance with art history and literature. He also advised the students to attain a healthy wholeness of mind and body and advocated active participation in physical exercise. Boxing, handball, baseball, and gymnastics brought together the young class members and strengthened the friendships born of mutual interest in art.[5] Years later, one of the group remembered Homer Boss as "the stalwart, beautiful, already dignified young fellow who contributed so much to that devotion to hard work and wild abandon to hard play which so disgracefully distinguished us. . . . a dear young friend of my youth."[6]

In those early years of study, Boss became adept at seeing what others overlooked, depicting the inner feelings of his subjects, and combining pigments which allowed colors to retain their freshness and vitality through the ages. His draftsmanship was strengthened by the study and discussion of reproductions which Henri often brought to class of the works of such master European artists as Titian, Velázquez, Rembrandt, Manet, and Degas.

Walter Pach (1883–1958), an artist and art critic, described his perceptions of Homer Boss at the New York School of Art:

> And so, for the young artist, the years around 1903 and 1904 were marked by concentration on the problem of expression thru [sic] character, thru the use of mass and light and shade, which were the phases of the picture most considered at the school.
>
> Of particular importance to Homer Boss were the visits of Thomas Anshutz, who came over from Philadelphia [beginning in 1906] to give those unforgettable demonstrations of anatomy which have made numberless American students his debtor.[7]

In the early years of the century, young painters who deviated from subjects intended for the drawing rooms of wealthy patrons had difficulty in getting their work selected for exhibition by the conventional jury system. The new generation of artists in New York City were realists who were interested in portraying the feelings of their human subjects and the generally modest social environments in which the models lived. Such work was held in low esteem by the art establishment, and many years later, a retrospective writer called these painters of urban realities the Ashcan School.[8]

Because Boss studied and painted alongside these men and chose his models for their availability and character rather than proffered commissions, his work was similar to the Ashcan School. However, since his realistic portrayals did not include broader social and urban commentaries, we cannot consider him a true member of the Ashcan School. In fact, the works which brought recognition to Boss in the early part of the century consisted of formal portraits reminiscent of preceding generations of artists though imbued with his own sense of lighting and line. This traditional portraiture undoubtedly enabled some of his early works to be accepted by the tradition-bound juries of the period.

The earliest portrait we have by Boss (fig. 1) shows a young woman seated obliquely to the viewer with a direct gaze of serene awareness. The finely modeled facial features, illuminated bodice with its filmy sleeves, and the slight gleams of light on the chair bring out details that become all the more interesting when contrasted with the almost

Fig. 1. Portrait, *ca. 1907, oil on canvas, dimensions and location unknown*

careless brushstrokes of the darkened background. The work appears at once exact and effortless.

From 1905 to 1910, Boss associated with such young progressive artists as Edward Hopper, George Bellows, Rockwell Kent, and Glenn O. Coleman. They organized a group known as The Fifteen in order to exhibit together.[9] The Fifteen met on Thursday evenings at Boss's studio in the Lincoln Square Arcade, 1947 Broadway, and held their first exhibition during the winter of 1907.[10] They rented lofts and space in galleries to show their paintings, but generally their works were ignored or deplored by the art reviewers.

John Sloan's diary in an entry for April 25, 1907 attests to the prevailing attitude of the critics:

> A paper last night says that the exhibition at the N. Y. School is bad, gloomy. If it is, if there's no good in the paintings of Sprinchorn, Bellows, Boss, Golz, etc., then I am all wrong—but I am not.[11]

Boss's painting was first recognized by the art establishment in 1907, when Robert Henri was selected for the thirty-man jury for the *Spring Exhibition 1907* at the National Academy of Design. Some 1500 works were presented alphabetically for the jury's appraisal. Henri was pleased when paintings by Bellows and Boss, the first of his pupils to be considered, were voted in. However, his associates Glackens, Luks, and Shinn, and his students Kent and Sprinchorn did not fare as well, and when his own three entries were not unanimously approved, he withdrew the two that had received negative votes, convinced that the old guard members of the jury were simply intent as usual on perpetuating their own styles. Six-hundred paintings were approved by the full jury. Then, space limitations required further reduction by a three-man jury to 378 works.[12] Boss's *Girl with a Fan* and Bellows's *River Rats* survived both juries' actions and were exhibited along with a few other paintings by Henri's colleagues.[13]

Fig. 2. Portrait of an Actress, *before 1908, oil on canvas, dimensions and location unknown*

Henri's dissatisfaction with the jury's artistic standards precipitated the now-famous exhibition by The Eight (Henri, Sloan, Shinn, Glackens, Luks, Lawson, Davies, and Prendergast) in 1908. This exhibition, the first important display of new realism in early twentieth century American art, helped pave the way for a more liberally organized spring exhibition at the National Academy of Design in February 1908. Modest reforms included abolishing the second round of eliminations by a three-man jury and granting permission to Henri's associates and students to hang their paintings as a group in one of the academy's galleries.[14] Although I have not been able to identify the artists included in that group, Boss's close association with Henri at that time makes me believe that he was represented.

The National Academy of Design's *Winter Exhibition 1908* included Boss's *Portrait of an Actress* (fig. 2), a work that had received favorable notice when exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts early in 1908. Thus, Boss's paintings were accepted for exhibition at the National Academy at least twice before he decided to submit nothing further to juries at that venerable but reactionary institution.

In late January 1908, comments had indeed been favorable on Boss's entry in the *103rd Annual Exhibition* at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. The *New York Times* reviewer J. Nilsen Laurvik discussed Boss and his *Portrait of an Actress*:

> As an example of reticent yet vigorous painting embodying what is best in the art of portraiture, this canvas by Boss marks the advent of a man who will surely come to occupy an important place in the world of art.
>
> In this portrait he has abandoned the mannerisms that fettered the full expression of his personality and we see the man in his own image. It is far superior to his "Girl with a Fan" shown in the Exhibition of Contemporary Art at the National Arts Club [early January 1908, as well as at the aforementioned 1907 National Academy of Design's Spring Exhibition], being more subtly modeled, the flesh tones beautifully rendered, and the whole figure dominated by a quiet distinction that lifts it above most of the portraits in an exhibition notable for its many fine examples of portraiture.[15]

Boss's *Portrait of an Actress* employs dramatic lighting effects. Light falls only on a bit of patterned blouse, on the pleasantly quizzical face under an immense dark hat, and on a strip of skirt showing through an opening of the heavy dark coat. The gloved hands are shadowed tones, and the background, a dark void that is more carefully blended than in *Portrait* (fig. 1), does nothing to distract from the model. The clean lines of the off-center figure and the sensitive, poised look suggest that Boss has moved away from a rapid brushstroke and in painting has established real empathy with his subject. (A friend recalled in later years that she had heard that Boss was in love with the actress and destroyed the painting when he was spurned after the portrait was exhibited.)[16]

Philip L. Hale, an artist who himself contributed to the same Pennsylvania exhibition, commended the show in *The Boston Herald* as one "in which almost every picture is a pretty good one," but he was less generous to the painters associated with Robert Henri:

> One of the humors of the show is the exhibit of the New York men. Not but what there are clever men among them, even among the Depressionist school. But some of these younger men—of evident talent like Messrs. Bellows and Homer Boss—seem to have got stuck in the asphaltum that paves the sidewalk of the house of Henri.
>
> And this is really a great pity. Because these two men especially show the makings of clever painters. It is too bad to see them bravely toiling after the black flag of a leader already lost.[17]

Henri created portraits with a limited palette against dark backgrounds, a characteristic that Hale derided. Another less acerbic reviewer saw Boss's promise extending beyond Henri's style:

> Homer Boss is another newcomer whose work is now for the first time recognized here. His portrait of an actress is very fine in color and characterization. He is a pupil of Robert Henri, but has evidently outgrown the influences of any teacher and stands for his own individuality.[18]

Henri left the New York School of Art after disagreements with its management and opened the Henri School of Art on January 11, 1909 in the Lincoln Square Arcade, 1947 Broadway and 66th Street. Many of Henri's former pupils, including Boss, enrolled in the new school. Studio lighting was poor in the new location, and when rain and fading daylight made painting almost impossible, Boss lectured on anatomy, carefully shaping clay into the forms of muscles which he placed on a skeleton while a nearby live model was directed to show the action of each muscle as it took its place on the developing figure.[19]

Boss's superior knowledge of anatomy had been stimulated by the teaching of Thomas Anshutz, Henri's former teacher at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Beginning in 1906, Anshutz had come from Philadelphia each year to present a series of demonstrations on the functions of bones and muscles to Henri's classes at the New York School of Art.

Walter Pach noted many years later:

> As Henri observed more than once, it was a real sculpture that the older artist [Anshutz] produced, a work having character and life and not merely a thing of scientific exactitude.
>
> Homer Boss was fascinated by this dramatic performance and never failed to see it again when Anshutz came to New York. Then, himself applying the lesson, he produced one work after another by the method he had learned. And with the unrelenting thoroughness typical of his whole

effort, he brought himself to such control of the problem that he was indeed a most worthy successor to that teacher of the remarkable group of painters who came from the Pennsylvania Academy somewhat over half a century ago [in the early 1900s] and, in "The Eight" and other exhibitions, did so much for American Art.

Anshutz, of course, one of the important pupils of Thomas Eakins, was unquestionably the greatest practitioner of artistic anatomy that this country has produced. Together the master and pupil dissected human and animal bodies, and so it was a precious heritage of understanding that was passed on to Homer Boss.[20]

Within a year after the opening of the Henri School, Boss was recognized as an associate instructor with Henri. Emil Holzhauer (1887–1986), a student of the school in that early period, recalled that "Henri came to teach twice a week while Boss was a more permanent teacher."[21]

> We all felt that he [Boss] was a most valuable asset to Henri's teaching as he concerned himself more with the fundamentals of technic and structural values. Henri could baffle us with a bravura technic during one of his infrequent demonstrations, while Boss would astound us with his knowledge of anatomy and sound craftsmanship; the two complemented one another beautifully.[22]

Another student witness to Boss's stature in the school, Randall Davey (1887–1964), wrote:

> When I entered the Henri School I found myself in an atmosphere of dignity, where unceasing effort was always manifest.
>
> Robert Henri was the master of this school but there were added factors which contributed to the intensity of feeling and respect we all felt for it. Chief among these factors was Homer Boss. We were all conscious of his presence and of the high regard Robert Henri had for him.
>
> The first time I saw Homer's painting was at the first Independent Exhibition in New York [1910] where his full length portraits made a deep impression on me. At that healthy period of American painting Homer Boss was one of the giants—respected and admired by us all.[23]

Exhibition of Independent Artists, 1910

The *Exhibition of Independent Artists* (hereafter referred to as the first independent show) was organized by Robert Henri, Walt Kuhn, and John Sloan to promote progressive American art. They sent invitations to about eighty artists whose works, they thought, lacked academic stiffness.[24] The Eight were invited as well as younger, lesser-known painters and avant-garde artists who had refused to submit entries to the National Academy of Design.[25] This invitational exhibition had no jury, an unusual condition at that time; the artists only needed to submit their work with a modest fee for each entry, and all artists were given unbiased treatment: works were hung in alphabetical order of the artist's name.

Boss exhibited three portraits in the first independent show: *Invernizzi* (fig. 3), *Young Woman in Blue and Gold* (fig. 4), and *Portrait of a Young Woman* (later exhibited as *Young Woman in Black*, cat. no. 1), which received this brief praise in *The Evening Mail*: "Among the good work by artists who are mostly unknown are some strong figure pieces by Homer Boss, who is now a working blacksmith."[26] The term "blacksmith" must have referred to Boss's use of dark backgrounds to prevent distraction from the figure. The three portraits had this trait in common, although the subjects and their execution differed decidedly.

Invernizzi (fig. 3), painted around 1907 to 1910, portrays a man standing, frontal view, pipe in hand. His face, two hands, and ascot are illuminated; his other clothing and features are barely distinguishable from the black background. (George Bellows painted the same subject with similar lighting, seated.[27] We may assume that Prosper Invernizzi, a fellow student at the New York School of Art and a member of The Fifteen, posed either for one of Henri's classes or for a group of his artist friends.)

Young Woman in Blue and Gold (fig. 4), which had been exhibited in 1910 at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, shows a new attention to

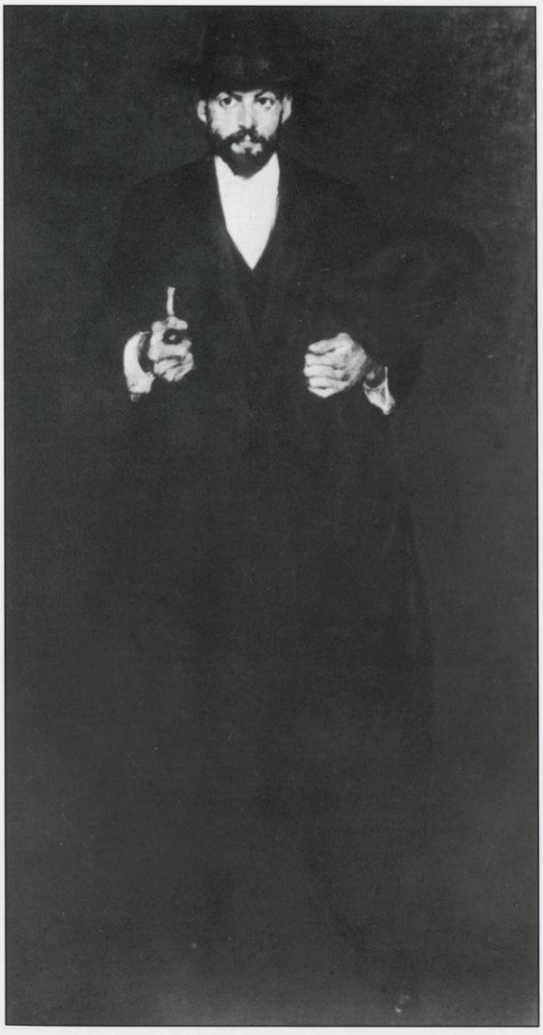


Fig. 3. Invernizzi, *before 1910, oil on canvas, dimensions and location unknown*

color. The gown is a panoply of blue in shadow and in light. The swirl of blue skirt and the pointed toe make the young woman appear to be momentarily poised before moving on. The rich gold tones of her belt and neckline complement the red of her bobbed hair. Again, light plays an important role with only three quarters of the figure being fully illuminated. In an article written for *Craftsman* magazine about the first independent show, Robert Henri described *Young Woman in Blue and Gold* as "a painting showing the tenderness and bravery and the imagination of Homer Boss."[28]

Portrait of a Young Woman (later exhibited as *Young Woman in Black*, cat. no. 1), presents a subject who appears to be of a different class from any of Boss's earlier portraits. Here is a large boned young woman with work-roughened hands, waiting patiently. Her dress and blouse are suited to the working class but her necklace is not. Is it a family piece? Is she an immigrant working at some menial job to make ends meet? Her eyes tell of resignation, and yet the proud angle of her head suggests inner strength and resolve. Although both the dress and background of this portrait are black, one is easily distinguishable from the other, and the full figure is presented almost frontally. The painting comes as close to Ashcan subjects as we find in Boss's work. It suggests that he has moved beyond the standard studio models and is seeking new subjects. Here Boss not only shows his skill in portraying well-modeled features but also expresses the depths of his subject's feelings.

The first independent show was a phenomenal success in its public recognition. On opening night, the gallery and street outside were so crowded by eager viewers that a small contingent of police had to be dispatched to control them. *The Evening Mail* provided a positive review:

> It was a good thing to get up this show. It gives struggling talent a chance; and it has produced a very strong and interesting exhibition. Naturally there are many "extreme" things; there is much struggling, half-realized work that will certainly go by the board. No matter; there is also a great deal of good and very promising work, from artists now unknown, whose work may some day be famous. This voluminous catalogue will yet be as interesting as are those early playbills that have Booth's or Mansfield's names on them in humble parts.[29]

The inclusion of Homer Boss's work in this invitational exhibition placed him among the progressive artists of the period. During the next few years he continued to submit paintings to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts which was more

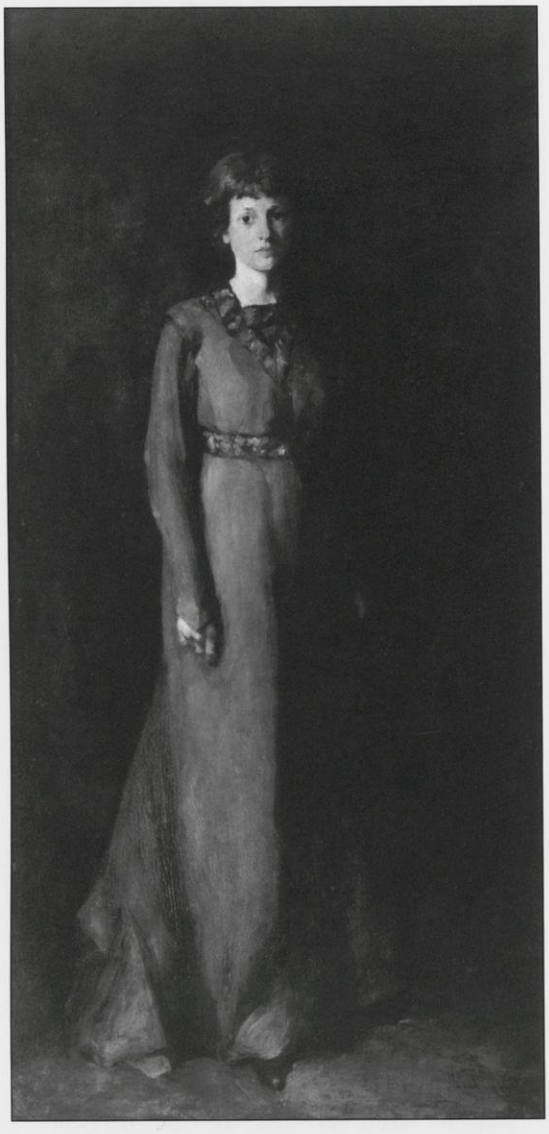


Fig. 4. Young Woman in Blue and Gold, *before 1910, oil on canvas, 82 x 40 in., courtesy Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Smykla, Jr., GMOA 91.120*

receptive to the young, innovative artists than was the National Academy. In these early years as student and teacher, Boss also exhibited frequently at the National Arts Club of New York City, a residential club with gallery space that embraced the efforts of the younger artists.

Homer Boss Grows

The public acclaim that the first independent show received was gratifying to Henri, and satisfied with the results of his work, he planned an excursion abroad. Having studied in Europe, he wanted to reacquaint himself with art there and to teach summer art classes in Spain. Before leaving, he and Homer Boss signed an agreement that completely turned over control of the Henri School of Art to Boss as of June 1, 1910. Beginning in October 1910, Henri was to instruct one day a week at a salary of $100.00 a month. The agreement also made provision for the possibility of a change in the school's name, thus anticipating the break that was to occur between the two men in the spring of 1912.[30]

Although the notice for the school year 1910–1911 in the *American Art Annual* listed "Robert Henri: Life, Portrait, Composition, and Homer Boss: Director: Drawing, Painting,"[31] and the following year listed only "Homer Boss, Director, Courses in drawing, painting and composition,"[32] no art students of that period and few art historians of recent times seem to have been aware of the deeding-over of the Henri School to Homer Boss as early as 1910.

Boss also directed the school's summer classes at Ironbound Island, off the coast of Nova Scotia at Chester, and at Monhegan Island, seventeen miles off the coast of Maine at Port Clyde. He and John C. McPherson, a good friend and student at the Henri School, first made the trip to Ironbound Island in 1910, painting there with a French artist, Charles Amaquet.[33]

Beginning in 1911, Boss and McPherson also painted at Monhegan Island. A year-round home of lobstermen and a summer paradise for artists, Monhegan is a rockbound gem of an island bordered by spectacular cliffs and studded with colorful wildflowers. Its romantic history claims that Captain John Smith landed there in 1614, and in the 1700s the island served as a haven for pirates.

While at Monhegan, the two young artists stayed at one of the little houses built by Rockwell Kent, who had been Boss's fellow student under Henri at the New York School of Art. Kent often joined them

as a painting companion on the island. In later years, Boss related that he and McPherson lived on two dollars a week and that he (Homer) was the cook. Cornmeal cooked in a hundred different ways was the staple of their diet.[34]

Through the mid 1920s, Boss, often accompanied by McPherson, revisited the islands to paint and/or teach. Still eager for sport, they purchased a sailboat on one of their trips to Ironbound, later giving it to Harris Young, the fisherman with whom they stayed. Homer and "Mac" made what might have been a nostalgic trip to Ironbound Island in 1926, for that was the year in which their painting companion of 1910, Charles Amaquet, died.

In this pastoral setting, Boss now concentrated on the land and sea rather than the human figure for inspiration. Like the Venetian masters whose works he had studied, Boss made small preliminary oil sketches for these early ventures into landscape painting. One such sketch on a board (*Island Pines*) retained the somber palette advocated by Henri, but a curious transformation occurred when Boss applied his ideas to the actual canvas. The thick, almost overlapping dark pines of the sketch gave way to a lighter, more airy appearance for the forest on canvas (*Island Pines*, cat. no. 2). Other early landscapes showed a beginning appreciation for subtle shades of green and blue while realistic clouds hovered in lowering skies as in *On the Shore*. As time passed, Boss's compositions openly began to embrace the brilliant blue skies found on idyllic sun-filled days, a full range of foliage hues, and the ever-shifting color complexities of the sea (*A Study*, later titled *A Study [Land and Sea]*, colorplate 2). The paintings from these summer excursions shed light on the stylistic changes in Boss's work as clean brushstrokes gave way to the scumbled pigments of impressionism (*Red Sail*). The influence of cubism which also crept into many of Boss's landscapes can be seen in his treatment of clouds and land forms of the islands (*Shore at Monhegan Island*). Such paintings as *Fishing Boats* (fig. 5) have elements of expressionism. It was to Boss's credit that he could incorporate new ideas

Fig. 5. Fishing Boats, *ca. 1920, oil on canvas, 30 x 36 in., private collection*

into his own manner of portraying scenes so that, while his paintings hinted of the latest trends in art, they were not dominated by them.

It was at Monhegan, especially, that Boss was stimulated to depict the play of the waves and the colorful planes of rocky coastlines in both oil and watercolors. His ability to portray the boundless energy or majestic serenity of the sea under varying weather conditions recreated scenes with the true smack of brine cascading onto the beach or crashing over the profusion of boulders (*Breaking Wave*, cat. no. 4). He seemed fascinated by the monumental proportions of a particularly rocky site (*Rock at Monhegan*, cat. no. 5) and painted it on several occasions through the years.

In 1910, Boss was elected a life member of the prestigious National Arts Club of New York City. He showed three paintings in its exhibition of contemporary art held in January of 1911 in New York. Subsequent displays of the exhibition were held in Detroit, Worcester, and Providence. *The Detroit News* reported that Director Griffith (of the Detroit Museum of Art) characterized the exhibition as one of the most important ever brought to that city. The reviewer commented:

> Homer Boss has three pictures that stand out. On the west wall is a "Portrait of a Young Girl." The girl wears a black dress, and there is a startling contrast between the dark costume and the flesh of her neck and arms. "Girl in Black" [later exhib-

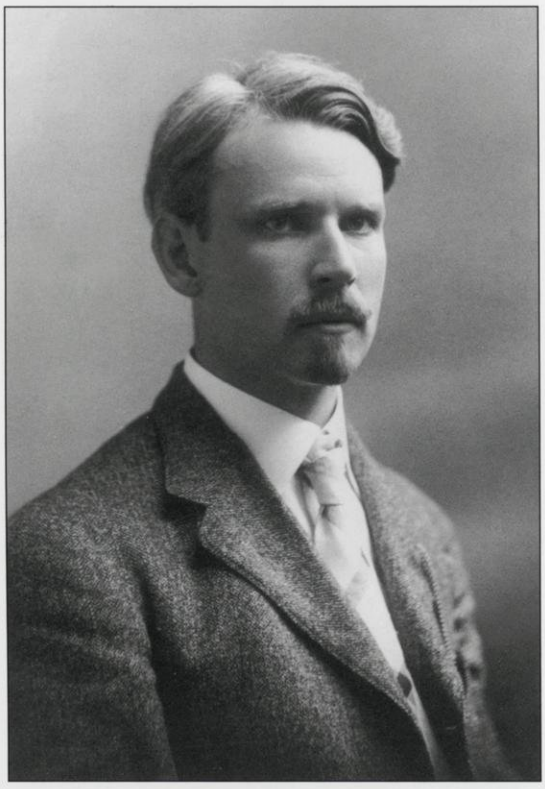


Fig. 6. Homer Boss in 1910

ited as *Young Woman in Black*, cat. no. 1] is another picture which shows Mr. Boss' skill in depicting black. The girl is far from handsome; the face is a study in character. "Young Woman in Blue and Gold," on the east wall is striking in color but conventional in pose.[35]

The Detroit Journal declared that the exhibition

> . . . represents the very latest and best works of 16 artists, most of them landscapists, who are devoting themselves to solving modern problems of light and atmosphere. . . .
>
> Perhaps the most satisfying picture in the group is the one which has been given the place of honor on the west wall, viz., "Portrait of a Young Woman" [*Portrait of a Young Girl*] by Homer Boss, a standing figure in a striking black gown, slightly decolleté.[36]

Perhaps tentative about his very recent forays into landscape painting, Boss had chosen to submit only portraits—and once again found positive recognition by doing so.

Homer Boss and Rockwell Kent suggested holding a second exhibition of independent artists' works.[37] They originally intended that those who exhibited in this show would refuse to exhibit at the National Academy of Design. This provision was retracted, however, since it would have discouraged some artists from entering. Held at the gallery of the Society of Beaux Arts in New York City in March 1911, the show featured the works of twelve men. Each artist was allotted twenty-five feet of wall or screen space on which to show his works, and one-hundred-and-fifty paintings were exhibited.[38]

Joseph Edgar Chamberlin began his complimentary newspaper review of the exhibition with these words:

> Our "Independent" exhibition this year is, when compared with last year's show of the same name, like the country paper of which its editor boasted that it was "reduced in size and otherwise improved." Instead of letting in the work of all the struggling geniuses and geniusesses, it presents the paintings and drawings of only twelve men, who are as follows—ranking them in the alphabet's, not genius's, order: Homer Boss, Glenn O. Coleman, Arthur B. Davies, Guy Pene Du Bois, Julius Golz, Marsden Hartley, Rockwell Kent, George B. Luks, John Marin, Alfred Maurer, John McPherson and Maurice Prendergast. Within this dozen of men we have practically the whole range of the utmost independence of the present day.

After discussing several of the paintings, Chamberlin concluded the review:

> Though one cannot go all the way with these extremists, it is due to this Independent show to say that it probably contains the most original and significant work of the season thus far, and that it will keep the candid and receptive observer profitably busy for some time.[39]

Not all the reviewers were as complimentary, but the negative aspects of the show seemed dependent on the extremely poor lighting in the gallery. Although it was announced that the exhibition was not intended as a successor of the 1910 independent salon, one reviewer stated that "The

new show is saner and more reasonable than any previous exhibition of the new movement presented here." He went on to ascribe to Homer Boss "some large portraits painted after the manner of Mr. Henri."[40] Another critic explained that "Homer Boss is perhaps the optimist of the group, the most apt example of the spirit of Christianity. His brush is the most kindly, the most generous, if that of Arthur B. Davies is the most idealistic."[41]

In all, Boss had seven paintings in *An Independent Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings of Twelve Men*, including "a finely painted portrait of An Old Man and a beautiful picture of a sad-faced Young Woman in white."[42] Chamberlin credited him for contributing "three or four good portrait studies and at least one charming landscape, which he calls 'Late Afternoon.'"[43] (This is the first record of Boss exhibiting a landscape.) In *The [New York] Sun*'s lengthy, rambling review, the only notice of Boss's work was in the phrase, "Homer Boss grows," and yet the only reproduction of a painting featured in *The Sun*'s coverage of the exhibition was *A Woman of the East* by Boss.[44]

A Young Woman (also exhibited as *Girl in White* and *Young Woman in White*, colorplate 1), is the only painting by Homer Boss from this independent painters exhibition for which we know the location today. The frontal, full-length presentation of the model has a grace and reserve reminiscent of works by Thomas Eakins (1844–1916), the teacher of Boss's mentors, Robert Henri and Thomas Anshutz. Subtle folds of the dress and a languid hand placed against the heart in the manner of Franz Hals's (1580–1666) later works create diagonal interest. The calm, fine featured face with its luminous eyes quietly invites the viewer to appreciate the splendor of the composition. Like other portraits of this early period by Boss, the figure is set against a dark background. Unlike many of those portraits, however, most of the figure is illuminated, and Boss now deals with shading and modeling light colors rather than dark ones.

The interest in exhibitions such as the first and second independent shows encouraged the formation of other small group exhibitions without the restrictions of juries or hanging committees. Beginning in November 1911, a select few artists held an exhibition at the MacDowell Club's gallery, 108 West 55th Street, New York City. For eight years thereafter, eight to twelve artists exhibited there every two weeks, providing a constantly changing view of American efforts in art.

At the seventh MacDowell Club group display in mid January 1912, Homer Boss exhibited with Robert Henri, E. Fuhr, William Glackens, Ernest Lawson, James Preston, Henry Reuterdahl, and John Sloan. An *American Art News* report described them, rather broadly, as "eight exponents of the impressionistic school," and observed that

> Homer Boss, whose virile portraits have established his repute in modern American art, shows several landscapes and portraits, all of interest. Especially good is his "Study in Brown," in which are [sic] agreeable color scheme of warm browns, enhances well-modeled flesh.[45]

It is probable that *Study in Brown* is synonymous with the full-length portrait of Hilda Ward that Boss painted in 1911. Miss Ward, an admiral's daughter and an artist, posed in a brown fur coat holding a matching fur lap robe and wearing a brown fur hat bedecked with a large pink rose. The rose, a gleaming gold hat-pin, the model's high-necked white blouse and her cream and pink flesh tones provide the only contrasts to a canvas otherwise completely awash in rich browns. The portrait has a largeness of feeling that makes Miss Ward seem both elegant and approachable.

In early February 1912, Boss submitted *Portrait of a Young Girl* to the *107th Annual Exhibition* of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. One reviewer described it as "one of the best and strongest he has produced."[46] Another compared Boss's work with that of J. Alden Weir's *Reverie*, a painting of a young girl with "nothing under the sun but youth and pure sincerity and sensitiveness." The reviewer continued:

> It is curious that none of our younger artists can paint the freshness of girlhood quite so convincingly as Mr. Weir. Mr. Boss in his wholly different manner comes closest to it.

> Mr. Boss catches the delicate nervous line of young contours with remarkable felicity. His subjects feel more keenly than Mr. Weir's perhaps; they are more alive to the stir of the world about, more eager for experience. But they are not less lovely in their quickened sensibility than the passive beauty of a slower-minded type. And they are painted with increasing confidence in the artist's individuality and increasing freedom from the natural bonds of an admiring pupilage.
>
> If we compare the "Portrait of a Young Girl" by Mr. Boss with Mr. Henri's "Woman with a Fan," we perceive enlightening differences and resemblances. The two gifted painters are the most interesting exponents of a school that will hardly have many followers while the present enthusiasm for outdoor conditions of light and air and for bright, pure color prevails.[47]

This criticism of darkness in Henri's and Boss's paintings was soon to be a thing of the past for Boss. Color was already playing an important role in his landscapes and seascapes of Maine and Nova Scotia, and as the years progressed, he would portray skillfully even the clear brilliance of desert and mountain colorations of New Mexico. Moreover, at the time of the foregoing review, February 1912, not only had the painting styles of the two artists begun to diverge, but the philosophical differences between the two men were reaching a point that would forever sever their comfortable relationship as fellow artists and friends.

Boss as Master of the Independent School

By the spring of 1912, the division finally occurred. For several years, the older artist had been experimenting with the Maratta palette—a rational system of color preparation and application in which twelve basic colors were set at equal intervals around a circle, with various hues and bi-colors between them. Each color could be equated with a tone of the musical scale, and with geometric figures superimposed over the color circle artists could plan harmonious patterns of color before they began to paint.[48] Since the palette now held twelve-dozen hues and tints, the spontaneous mixing of colors for an effect was practically eliminated. George Bellows, who also used the Maratta palette, even wrote a letter endorsing it for advertisements by an art goods supplier.[49] Henri was so convinced of the desirability of the palette that he insisted that it be used by all students at the Henri School. Boss, however, thought the palette made painting too mechanical; he felt that its use should be optional.

Although many students who attended the school's day classes took up the palette, those who attended the evening classes, especially, had reservations about its use. Their reasons included practicality and expense, since, as Emil Holzhauer, an evening student, remarked: "the palette had to be kept in a water basin to prevent the pigments from drying up" and "half the paints would dry up no matter how careful one was."[50] When a vote by the entire student body showed that they, like Boss, rejected the compulsory adoption of the Maratta system, Henri ended his affiliation with the school.

As the June 1, 1910 contract had stipulated, the name of the school now could be changed, and Boss renamed it the Independent School of Art. It was first advertised as such in the June 1912 issue of *International Studio*.[51] A. S. Baylinson (1882–1950), who had been a student under both Henri and Boss, became the manager and remained in that capacity for the life of the school.

The Armory Show, 1913

Within a year of the birth of the Independent School, an art exhibition of international scope was held in New York City that most art historians believe was critical to the development of American art in the twentieth century. Accordingly, it had immense influence on the direction of the Independent School.

The idea for this large exhibition was originally conceived by members of the Association of American Painters and Sculptors in order to promote the cause of American artists. However, Arthur B. Davies, president of the association, suggested that European artists also be invited to exhibit in order to give both American artists and the American

public the opportunity to see a more complete spectrum of contemporary art. In February and March of 1913, the *International Exhibition of Modern Art* was held at the Armory of the Sixty-ninth Infantry in New York City and, due to its site, the exhibition has become popularly known as the Armory Show.[52]

Most of the major twentieth-century artists were represented in the exhibition. Over two-hundred Americans had their work displayed, including George Bellows, Homer Boss, Arthur B. Davies, William Glackens, Childe Hassam, Robert Henri, Edward Hopper, Walt Kuhn, Ernest Lawson, George Luks, John Marin, Jerome Myers, Walter Pach, Maurice Prendergast, Albert Ryder, John Sloan, Joseph Stella, J. Alden Weir, and Mahonri Young. Among the more than one-hundred Europeans represented, some are now almost legendary: George Braque, Paul Cezanne, Leon Dabo, Edgar Degas, Marcel Duchamp, Raoul Dufy, Paul Gauguin, Francisco Goya, Wassily Kandinsky, Edouard Manet, Henri Matisse, Claude Monet, Paul [Pablo] Picasso, Odilon Redon, Pierre August Renoir, Georges Rouault, Henri Rousseau, Georges Seurat, Henri Toulouse-Lautrec, and Vincent Van Gogh.

This first exposure to works by the European avant-garde artists evoked both ridicule and indignation from the American public and journalists. The most notorious entry was Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase*, which prompted a contest to find the nude. One critic derided the painting as "an explosion in a shingle factory." Another renamed the painting "Staircase Descending a Nude."[53] Along with the furor over the international artists, there emerged a curiosity about the new trends of cubism, expressionism, and fauvism. Many American artists wondered whether they should emulate, incorporate, or ignore these revolutionary ideas!

At least one reviewer, however, did not overlook the American artists' contributions to this display of over 1,000 paintings, drawings, prints, and sculptures. Writing in the *Craftsman* magazine, the reviewer credited artists like The Eight for "holding their work in a fine, sane, beautiful balance between the formalist on one hand and the extreme Futurist on the other." Their work constituted:

> a school of painting in America, one that has developed out of the impulse toward beauty of the native born Americans expressing their interest in the conditions which go to make up their environment. We find this group of men never at a standstill; progressive, open-minded, generous, absolutely sincere and quite fearless. We find a richer color note in their work from year to year, as the color sense in this country develops, and never the abnormal note. We find a greater freedom and fluency of technique without the breaking down of all fundamental principles of structure and progress.[54]

Homer Boss exhibited two paintings in the Armory Show. *Portrait* (also exhibited as *Young Woman in Blue and Gold*, fig. 4), had been exhibited in 1910 at both the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and the first independent show. Executed in the dimly lit full-length pensive portrait mode, *Portrait* represented Boss's traditional early style of painting. The other work, *A Study* (also exhibited as *A Study [Land and Sea]* colorplate 2), presented a departure in style for Boss. Having recently painted on the coasts of Maine and Nova Scotia, Boss now submitted a landscape where light and color prevailed. Shades of green and blue dominated the land, sea, and sky, while a blue-gray rocky terrain presented contrasting contours. Treatment of the foreground meadow grasses and bushes, and the high-lighted red-orange sumac fruit hinted of impressionism. With this painting, Boss had taken a bold step in a new direction, and in the following years, influenced by what he had seen at the Armory Show, Boss was to evolve a style that incorporated the new ideas even while he maintained his allegiance to realism.

The Independent School after the Armory Show

The Armory Show's impact on the nation's artists was immediate. Nowhere was this more evident than at the Independent School where Boss and others were now totally absorbed in experimenting with the latest trends in art from Europe. Many of

Henri's former pupils had remained at the school and now, remembering Henri's philosophy of encouraging experimentation and individual expression, they were able to look upon the European innovations with open minds. However, some wondered how Henri could have lived and painted in Europe without being affected by these trends in art; they considered Henri passé, and as Emil Holzhauer recalled, "Pretty soon, only examples of post-impressionism, cubism and futurism were being produced in the studio."[55]

The distinguished American painter, Yasuo Kuniyoshi (1893–1953), who had studied briefly at the Henri School in earlier years, was a student at the Independent School from 1914 to 1916. He has written:

> Everybody was talking about the Armory Show. Cubism was in the air. Reproductions of Van Gogh, Gauguin, and the masters of the late nineteenth century filled the walls of the school. I was caught up in this excitement without really understanding what it was all about. For the first time I began to feel at home.[56]

Boss expressed the principles of the Independent School and his own philosophy in the school's catalogue. He defined the principles:

> That it be a school independent in the fullest sense of the word. Have no affiliations, conform to no dogma or creed of Art, impose no formula upon its members and exercise no authority over them.
>
> That its classes be open to the Student of Art for individual study and experiment. That its criticism recognize the individual and aim to help in the development of that which is most personal—and to a technical knowledge organically constructive, expressive, interpretive, and suited to the individual needs.
>
> I believe that through its Art the soul of the race is expressed. I therefore believe in an Art in America that shall be of its own soil—the expression of the life and environment from which it springs.
>
> I do not believe that any Art worthy the name can come through the slavish imitation of forms by which a people long dead has expressed itself; nor do I believe that it can be the transplanted growth of another soil.
>
> I believe in a School of Art that shall be the open door to the future. I believe that the function of the teacher is to be the helper, not the master—the dictator. I believe that technical criticism should deal not with method, style or formula, but with fundamental constructive principles from which the individual's own method may be developed.[57]

Anita Malfatti (1889–1964), one of the foremost modern artists of Brazil, enthusiastically credited Homer Boss and his liberal philosophy for enabling her "to make the greatest progress in my life."[58] Malfatti's autobiography in Portuguese entitled *1917* described her experiences as his student and detailed the ambiance and importance of the Independent School—an importance that has been overlooked in North American books of art history. In her initial studies in the United States at the Art Students League in 1915, Malfatti felt restricted by her teachers and thus, on a friend's recommendation, sought out Homer Boss who was holding summer classes on Monhegan Island. At their first meeting, Boss tested her mettle by taking her out in a small boat, piloting close to the forbidding rocks of the Maine coastline. Apparently she passed this unusual test, for when they returned, he permitted her to paint with the class.

Malfatti wrote, "I started on a bucolic idyll. We painted in the wind, we painted in the sun, in the rain, in the fog."[59] Boss encouraged Malfatti to experiment freely with forms and colors while concentrating on natural scenes. Her painting *A Ventania* (The Wind) suggests the extreme sensation of being blown about and lashed by the fury of the elements; this same feeling is captured in a Boss painting of this period, *Battle with the Winds* (also known as *Hurricane)*. Some of the most important landscapes of Malfatti's career were painted in the summers of 1915 and 1916 when she studied on Monhegan Island with Boss.[60]

Malfatti believed that Boss put his students in contact with nature and life itself. But for Boss, nature with its anger and calms was not enough; he wanted to perceive its inner mystery, its terrors, and its grandeur. She mentioned the four months he spent with students in Labrador, living in an old fishermen's barrack.[61] Boss painted scenes with "an

Eskimo-like atmosphere—white, ice, aquamarine, igloolike structures, all very beautiful, small (fifteen to twenty inches), and abstract."[62] Several of these paintings were sold at an auction in the 1920s, and their whereabouts are now unknown.

In the fall of 1915, the Monhegan students and their teacher returned to civilization and the Independent School of Art in New York. Here, Boss gave instruction in anatomy, the movement of muscles, and the geometric construction of basic design. Boss and his students experimented with the effects of broken light and the accentuated angling of planes. In the spring of 1916, *The New York Times* characterized a one-man show of Boss's new work as being in transition, with angular forms and interesting arrangements of color showing the influence of the modernists overlying his realistic style.[63] Anita Malfatti painted violently colored, distorted portraits in oil during this year of study at the Independent School, which were shown during Brazil's scandalous Week of Modern Art in São Paulo in 1922. They are considered the best works of her long and illustrious career.[65]

The Independent School attracted a diversity of artists and intellectuals, some of whom were refugees from the Russian Revolution or the ravages of war in Europe. Isadora Duncan and her troupe of dancers frequented the studio, and the girls sometimes posed for the artists. Diaghilev and members of the Russian Ballet were also present; in 1916, an exhibition by Boss's students served as a benefit for the ballet. Other visitors included the American artist-journalist Walter Pach, the French artist Marcel Duchamp, the German-French artist Jean Crotti, and the Russian writer Maxim Gorki. Malfatti noted that visitors were always welcomed and integrated in a natural manner: some sketching the model, some writing in a little corner, and one or two trying out new dance steps in a composition.[65] She remembered Homer Boss as a stimulating philosopher who enabled others to discover their own temperaments and strengths and Boss's Independent School of Art as a dynamic and liberal organism that was of great influence in developing modern techniques of artistic expression.

The New York Times Magazine (May 28, 1916) included the Independent School in an article about the new spirit and methods used in various New York art schools. The introduction dwelt on the necessity for art students to receive adequate training in the fundamentals of drawing, for "no good work can exist without preliminary drudging at the problems of structure, and you must know all that you choose to leave out as well as all that you choose to put in."[66] The article continued:

> One must therefore applaud such conscientious effort to encourage thorough analysis of form as one finds in the Independent School of Art, where Homer Boss directs the life class. The exhibited studies show a highly modern tendency toward life-communicating movement and plasticity of form, a tendency existing side by side with the opposite tendency toward emphasizing the monumental and static. The very ugliness of the faces and bodies in most of the life studies expresses the effort of the student to get at the secrets of muscular strain and pressure, of planes and directions, of what might be called anatomy in action. Mr. Boss has adopted the ingenious plan of building up a muscular organization on the scaffolding of a human skeleton with clay or wax, so that his pupils can follow each development of anatomical relations as directly as possible and can at once perceive the bony structure and its drapery. As no really great style can exist without the quality of force, and as the quality of force is gained by thorough understanding of the sources of vital energy, the students in this school are well started on the road to significant accomplishment whether they choose portraiture, mural painting, or book cover designing, for their future field of action.[67]

In a comparison of New York City art schools and their methods that appeared in *Art World* in March 1917, the Independent School received more complimentary comments. This followed a discussion of the Art Students League:

> In the Arcade Building on Broadway we find a school of an entirely different type, the Independent School. Here is a place that is unique in America and is entirely free from formulas, documents or stipulations. Every man or woman finds there an unobstructed field for personal observation, investigation and experiment. The classes are conducted on a plan which gives the greatest

facilities to all. The beginner's own soul will not be warped to fit within the narrow margin of an art creed. It will develop itself naturally from the direct study of nature and not from an inanimate cast. Whatever form of art his personal impulse and temperament will order him to follow, he will be free from the dictating influence of another personality. The head of the school is Homer Boss, the friend and helper of his pupils, rather than their tyrannic pedagogue.[68]

A personal testimonial to the above may be taken from the brief autobiography by Morris Kantor (1896–1974) published in the *American Magazine of Art*. Kantor related that he came to America from Russia knowing that he wanted to draw, but unable—for financial reasons—to pursue his interest during the first five years after his arrival. Then, when he was eighteen, his improved earnings and better working hours allowed him to resume "drawing again, though this time with the definite purpose of becoming a cartoonist." He continued,

> My drawing consisted of quite indiscriminately copying everything I laid my eyes on in the hope that I could perfect myself in that way. Then, by chance one day, I met a student from the Independent School of Art. When he saw my drawings he was very encouraging and suggested that I enroll in night courses at this school. He also advised me to aim higher than cartooning, but my interest was completely absorbed by the idea of combining drawing and earning a living. However, art school sounded like a sensible idea so I joined two years later when I had saved enough money for the tuition.
>
> The Independent School of Art was like a new world to me; the language spoken there was as foreign to my ears as English had been when I first arrived in this country. I had never known artists or conceived that there might be more in art than mere reproduction, but here I came in contact with a group of rebels in art. They had a zest for trail-blazing and were experimenting with their own forms as freely as they chose. The constant talk about the Armory Show, Cezanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Picasso, about good and bad art, were the first views I had ever heard expressed. I was both impressed and influenced by the liberal point of view. Homer Boss, the instructor, and A. S. Baylinson, who was at that time the secretary of the school, did much to encourage me and I immediately set to work drawing and painting along my own lines, having at the first contact with these people lost my previous ambition to become a cartoonist.[69]

Although Kantor was captivated by the spirit of modernity in this early period of his art studies, he first achieved renown for his realistic paintings, a style he embraced when he went to Paris in 1925. At the time of Kantor's death, his early abstract cubist paintings were slowly being rediscovered, appreciated, and hung in some of America's finest museums.

Throughout Kantor's broad career as a painter and teacher, he credited Homer Boss for being his mentor. Their friendship in the early years was illustrated by Boss's paintings: *Portrait of Morris Kantor* (cat. no. 3) as a young art student, and *Morris Kantor* as a maturing, suavely sensitive artist in 1927. The latter portrait hangs at the Art Students League in New York City where both men were inspiring teachers in later years.

The two portraits, painted within a decade of one another, provide insight to Boss's stylistic evolution at that time. The earlier Morris Kantor shows the continuing influence of impressionistic trends first noted in Boss's *A Study (Land and Sea)* (colorplate 2). Undoubtedly further stimulated by the Armory Show's impressionistic paintings, Boss presents the portrait against a thickly swirled background. The figure seems hastily executed and yet the details of rumpled, well-filled out suit jacket, four-in-hand tie tucked with care into the vest, furrowed brow, and thoughtful demeanor make a powerful statement of the complexities of the youthful artist's character. In the 1927 *Morris Kantor* the background is simply shaded, and the clean lines of the suit cause the eye to focus instead on the white shirt cuff, strong hand, and the model's face, which, while older-looking, also appears more rested, more self-assured. A nonchalant sideways pose adds to the projection of quiet self-confidence. The realistic figure appears to have been painted with deliberate strokes that clearly define the subject.

The Demise of the Independent School

When America entered World War I, there were not enough students to operate the Independent School efficiently.[70] "Ultimately, Boss's interest in the school was bought out by some of the students. It continued to operate briefly under Baylinson's management as a workshop studio, where a group of students met for painting sessions without instruction."[71]

After leaving his position as master of the Independent School during the war, Boss worked for a time as a toolmaker in a button factory in New Jersey. Emil Holzhauer, who also supported himself as a toolmaker on occasion, recalled, "We used to sympathize with one another."[72] Boss lost the little finger of his left hand in a factory accident during this period, but, fortunately, that did not hinder his painting.

The Lincoln Arcade continued to be a focal point for artists of similar persuasion to meet, paint, and enjoy fellowship, and Boss shared the large studio of the old Independent School there with Baylinson, Kantor, McPherson, and others. They painted from a live model one evening a week, and sometimes enticed a likely looking prospect in from the street to pose for them.

An article written about Homer Boss by Walter Pach in 1922 not only sounds a final note for the Independent School, but also gives insights about Homer Boss, the man. It can be found in the Appendix.

New Ventures

The success of small unjuried group exhibitions in New York City prompted the formation of the Society of Independent Artists (SIA) in 1916. Homer Boss, one of the founders of the society, served on its board of directors the first year and again from 1920 to 1924. An annual unjuried exhibition was a focal point of the society, and Boss exhibited in its first and many succeeding shows.[73]

An initiation fee of one dollar and annual dues of five dollars entitled artists to become members of the society and to submit two works to the annual exhibition. With the decree of "no jury and no prizes," each artist became the sole judge of his own works. Pictures were hung alphabetically, and in an effort to be as free from bias as possible, Marcel Duchamp, another founder of the society, suggested that the alphabetical letter which began the hanging be chosen by lot each year.[74]

The society's organizers estimated that two- to three-hundred artists might submit works to the first annual exhibition in April of 1917 at the Grand Central Palace in New York City. However, 1,365 artists participated with 2,400 entries. Reactions of the 20,000 viewers and critics were mixed. The society was lauded for presenting contemporary art which was not screened by a jury, thereby allowing viewers to be the judges. On the other hand, the enormous number of entries overwhelmed some visitors, and the alphabetical hanging was denounced for carrying democratic processes too far. In succeeding years, most of the public became accustomed to the gigantic "paint circus" atmosphere of the annual exhibitions, and the Society of Independent Artists was able to present effectively the ever-changing character of American art throughout the course of twenty-eight years.

In 1921 James Rosenberg compared the annual exhibition at the National Academy of Design with a cemetery, and that of the Society of Independent Artists with a womb wherein some life was stirring. Boss's painting, *The Sea*, later titled *Marine*, was one of seven paintings symbolizing the "stirrings of the womb" that illustrated Rosenberg's article.[75]

This painting shows an evolution in Boss's style. No longer painting the sea with a thick, impressionistic brush, here he makes a forthright presentation of agitated undercurrents and billowing breakers upon a rocky coastline with clear strokes. Geometrical organization is important. In the foreground is a welter of light-tinged brown and greenish black rocks with severe planes that create a triangular form with the billows. In the background, the heavy, turbulent waters add horizontal interest as they come rushing in behind the breakers. Spray and veils of mist lift off the water with both swirling and vertical lines creating an atmosphere that can almost be felt.

Boss's entries in 1923 (*An Island Gateway* and *Portrait—Miss M.*) were favorably commented upon by Walter Pach in *Freeman* magazine:

> . . . it is heartening to find a painter like Homer Boss making as long a forward stride as is marked by his two pictures of this year. The anatomist who continues the remarkable tradition of Eakins and Anshutz is seen as clearly in the painting of boats—their lines playing together like moving muscles and giving the whole picture a unity like that of the human body—as in the "Portrait," a work which also shows a beautiful colour-quality.[76]

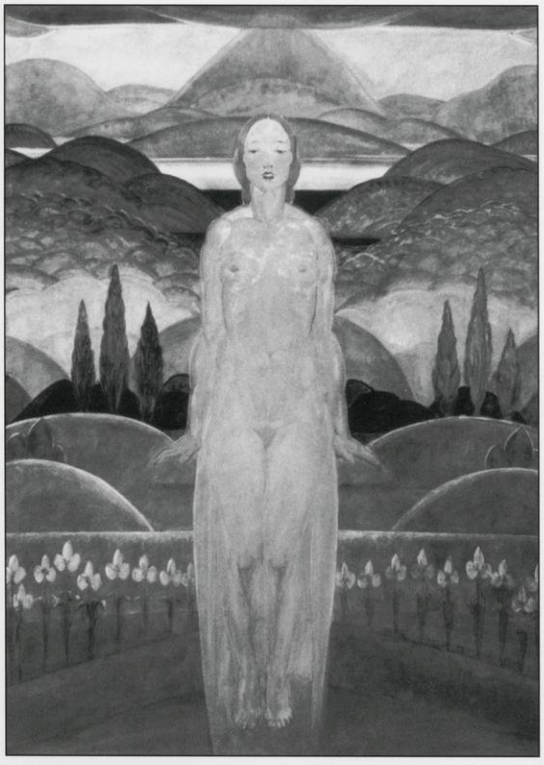


Fig. 7. The Garden Between Dawn and Sunrise, *ca. 1919, oil on canvas, 73½ x 54 in., courtesy Madison Art Center, Madison, Wisconsin, gift of Susan and Jon Udell*

After the Society of Independent Artists' first year, John Sloan served as its president, continuing in this capacity until its demise in 1944. Boss served as vice-president during the 1923–24 term. There were long-standing differences in the personalities of the two men: Sloan was an aggressive publicity seeker of socialist leanings, and Boss was a private, laconic type who favored individual freedoms. Now, serving together as officers of the SIA, they chafed one another again; Boss resigned from the society shortly thereafter, stating that he did not wish to be a party to the gaining of further publicity for Sloan. It wasn't until 1941, on the occasion of the society's twenty-fifth anniversary, that Boss again submitted a painting to an SIA exhibition.

The Influence of *Jurgen*

Meanwhile, Boss had become absorbed in experimenting with varied ideas about art. One undertaking reflected the inspiration of literature, and he set forth the sensations produced by imagination in such paintings as *The Dawn* and *The Garden Between Dawn and Sunrise* (also exhibited as *Between Dawn and Sunrise*, fig. 7). These were based on *Jurgen,* a popular book published around 1919.[77] The author, James Branch Cabell, personalized a mystical universe in which the physical and commonplace were illusion and dreams were reality. The story detailed the adventures of Jurgen, a prosaic middle-aged pawnbroker, who was restored to his poetic youthfulness in the garden between dawn and sunrise.

> Around the garden was an unforgotten circle of blue hills. And this was a place of lucent twilight, unlit by either sun or stars, and with no shadows anywhere in the diffused faint radiance that revealed this garden, which is not visible to any man except in the brief interval between dawn and sunrise.

Then a host of couples in the glory of their youth passed by, walking in the first glow of dawn. One such couple, embracing amid trees and hills of unreal splendor, became the feature of Boss's painting, *The Dawn*. After a time, there appeared

> a gold-haired woman, clothed all in white, walking alone. She was tall, and lovely and tender to regard: and hers was not the red and white comeliness of many ladies that were famed for beauty, but rather it had the even glow of ivory. . . . and yet, whatever other persons might have said, to Jurgen this woman's countenance was in all things perfect. . . . for Jurgen saw this was . . .

> Dorothy la Desirée, whom Jurgen very long ago (a many years before he met Dame Lisa and set up in business as a pawnbroker) had hymned in innumerable verses as Heart's Desire.
>
> "And this is the only woman whom I ever loved," Jurgen remembered, upon a sudden. For people cannot always be thinking of these matters.

In harmony with Cabell's philosophy that "the artist [used in a broad sense for all the arts] is a demiurge, a creator of new worlds, lovely and inhabitable because they are unlike the world which our bodies inhabit,"[78] Boss did not duplicate the illusion described in the novel, but interpreted his own vision in painting Dame Dorothy in *The Garden Between Dawn and Sunrise* (fig. 7). Boldly delineated moundlike hills in deep blues and salmon form the almost symmetrical background for the central figure of the enigmatic Dorothy. Clad only in a suggestion of a filmy gown, she imparts both a sense of serenity and a mysterious vitality.

As Cabell did with words, so Boss did with oils in this assay into modernism, creating allusions that set the real world of unreality against the unreal world of realism.

Both *The Dawn* and *The Garden Between Dawn and Sunrise* were shown at exhibitions of the Society of Independent Artists. In addition, *The Dawn* and Boss's painting *The Red Fog* were included in the *Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings Showing the Later Tendencies in Art* shown at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 1921. This was hailed as one of the most important exhibitions of works by younger painters at that time.[79] Thomas Jewell Craven, well-known art critic, remarked that the group of painters in the show had "at least one interest in common, the knowledge that art is based on design and not on natural imitation."[80]

Craven's review grouped Boss's paintings with submissions by Arthur B. Davies, Georgia O'Keeffe, Abraham Walkowitz, Marguerite Zorach, and William Zorach in a category he called

> a new symbolism, an art allied with Futurism when it deals with the figure, and with Expressionism when it becomes abstract. These pictures engage to present states of the soul, to put into graphic form indefinable emotions, to stir the sensibilities of the observer into response by means of arresting emblems portrayed in brilliant colour and free line.

Craven summed up the exhibition:

> These pictures speak unanimously when they say that art is not the reflex of actuality; that it must create a reality peculiar to itself to bear the stamp of meaning and the signature of beauty; they speak triumphantly against pedantry and studio formulae; they transport us into a world of freedom where preferences large or small, emotional or ideational, true or fanciful, may have their expression.[81]

Not everyone was so enthusiastic about the show, however. The critic for the *Philadelphia Morning Telegraph* commented so disparagingly on a painting in the exhibition by Paul Burlin that Burlin's friends threatened a lawsuit, forcing the journalist to apologize. Shortly thereafter, a symposium of physicians meeting in Philadelphia diagnosed modern art as insane.[82]

The committee making the selection for the exhibition included Thomas Hart Benton, Paul Burlin, Arthur B. Carles, Bernard Gussow, Joseph Stella, Alfred Stieglitz, and William Yarrow, who were recognized leaders of the modernist movement. When Albert Stieglitz had headed the Little Gallery of Photo-Secession that flourished in New York City from 1905 to 1917, those who regarded him as a mentor had embraced art as experimental research and applauded avant-garde styles at such an early date that they considered Henri and his independent friends in the first part of the century to be "conventional if not retarded."[83] The inclusion of Boss's works in this exhibition of the Later Tendencies in Art demonstrates the distance Boss had traveled from his early manner of painting under Robert Henri's guidance.

The Modern Artists of America

In 1921, Boss was one of the incorporators of a new organization, the Modern Artists of America, and Henry Fitch Taylor was elected its first president.[84] Members included some of Boss's former

students as well as several artists who had been associated with the 1921 exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy. Members in 1921 were A. S. Baylinson, Ben Benn, Thomas Hart Benton, Homer Boss, Louis Bouché, Alexander Brook, Horace Brodsky, Paul Burlin, Andrew Dasburg, James Daugherty, S. Wood Gaylor, Bernard Gussow, Morris Kantor, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Robert Laurent, Henry McFee, Gus Mager, David Morrison, Elie Nadelman, George F. Of, Niles Spencer, Joseph Stella, Max Weber, Isabel L. Whitney, William H. K. Yarrow, and William Zorach.[85]

Aside from this impressive list of artists who were leaders in the modern movement in America, I have been unable to learn anything of the organization's incorporation, goals, or accomplishments. Perhaps the untimely death of Henry Fitch Taylor in 1925 was responsible, in part, for this lack of documentation. The organization's duration was short, as indicated by the fact that members listing their affiliation with the Modern Artists of America in the *American Art Annual* did so only through 1927.

Book Illustrations

The writing of another author, Waldemar Bonsels, inspired Boss to draw some most appealing little creatures for the Thomas Seltzer publishing firm of New York City in 1922. *The Adventures of Maya the Bee* by Bonsels was a children's tale that could interest older readers as well, dealing with insects endowed with personalities, woodland inhabitants, and sprites. Years later, Suzanne, Boss's wife, recalled: "Homer made intensive studies of the various insects from actual specimens. He never did anything by halves. I found boxes of dried bugs in his studio at one time."[86] Both line drawings and full-page color illustrations were included in *Maya the Bee*. The whimsical creatures that Boss created were not static realistic studies, but appeared to have life pulsing within them as they met their various adventures and fates.

Further Teaching

In 1923, Homer Boss began a long period of teaching at the Art Students League in New York City. The league had been formed in 1875 by a group of students at the National Academy of Design as an independent school of art. Self-governed and self-supporting, the school offered training and education in art embodying what was felt to be the most advanced ideas in instruction. Distinguished and competent artists were invited to serve on its staff as instructors and lecturers.[87]

At various times throughout his association with the school, Boss conducted classes in life drawing, antique drawing, painting, and composition, and, in addition, gave the instruction in anatomy for which he had become renowned. The latter course, a series of weekly lectures entitled "The Building of the Human Figure," was divided into eight sessions: (1) muscles of torso, (2) muscles of upper leg, (3) muscles of lower leg, (4) underlying muscles of arm, (5) completion of arm and torso, (6) head and neck, and (7) and (8) principles of muscular action. These lectures were described in the league's catalogue as giving "a most graphic idea of human anatomy as Mr. Boss demonstrates his talks by modeling the muscles in clay and placing them on a skeleton, actually building the figure."[88] "His engaging and authoritative lectures on anatomy indicate the thoroughness of his methods, which apply as strongly to his studio direction."[89]

A former student at Boss's anatomy lectures wrote: "They were marvelous—the best series I ever had; it's too bad he never did them commercially. There was talk of having them filmed, but I don't know the details."[90] Another student at the Art Students League, Cecil C. Bell, painted a scene of the extraordinary lectures in 1937,[91] preserving a singular but important record of the diligence that helped teach many now-famous artists their craft.

After the 1927–28 school session ended, the corresponding secretary of the board of control wrote this appreciation to Boss:

> Your classes have been wonderful and we are so appreciative for all the extra time and work you have devoted to them. It certainly has had great results, for your following is being felt thro' out the school and I think is showing in the work that is coming from your classes. It is so individual and personal and a great inspiration to all the

> school. . . . We consider you not only one of the League's great friends, but one of our greatest teachers, and I want you to know what a very large place you have in all our hearts.[92]

During Prohibition, the adult students in Boss's evening classes at the league would end each week with a prolonged bull session at one of the speakeasies near the school—such as the German Athletic Club. According to Homer's wife, Suzanne, "They drank beer and talked and listened to their teacher until the wee hours of the morning. I never knew when he came home on Fridays.—It was their conclave night."[93]

Among Boss's students was Stewart Klonis, whom Boss considered "one of the most personal of our younger painters"[94]—and who subsequently became the director of the Art Students League. Klonis paid Boss this tribute:

> It is appropriate that I speak of Homer Boss as one of his many students who came to him to learn to draw, and, after four years, I had learned to draw and paint. But, more important, I was given a true and liberal education. His was a truly mature mind and the core of his philosophy was art. And art was a serious business not to be limited by past concepts nor swayed by contemporary fads; but a business requiring a superior mind, a disciplined skill and a highly personal ideal, and he lived by it.[95]

The Exhibition in Germany

In the early 1920s, while Boss was painting with friends in the cooperative Lincoln Arcade studio, he met Helen, a young friend of one of the artists. By this time Boss was white-haired, and his quiet, dignified manner made him appear much older than he really was. Helen reported that although the others in the group called him "Pop," she respected him too much to do so.

When Boss asked if she'd like to sit for a portrait, Helen agreed. She recalled that the sitting took five to eight afternoons at Boss's own studio on 14th Street, off Union Square, and that he was quiet and moved slowly while painting.[96] The portrait, entitled *Nordic Spring* (fig. 8), shows a strawberry-blonde young woman, seated obliquely to the viewer, wearing a lustrous fur coat. Her head is turned slightly, creating a faint shading of one side of her well-modeled features. The dark backgrounds of Boss's formal portraits in the early part of the century are a now a thing of the past. Here, the background is mainly the myriad of blue-green mounded hills that so dramatized the background of Boss's painting *Between Dawn and Sunrise*. These shapes provide a contrast to, but do not disturb the effect of, the calm, measured pose of the young woman.

Helen was acquainted with Dr. Ludwig Roselius, who had built the Böttcherstrasse, the cultural center in Bremen, Germany. Roselius, owner of the Kaffee Hag Company in Bremen, was known as the "sugar daddy" of Worpswede, an artists' colony outside of that city. While he was visiting in New York City, Helen took him to see Boss's paintings. Roselius was impressed and offered to arrange an exhibition and cover the expenses so that some of Boss's work could be shown at the Böttcherstrasse. Ten of Boss's paintings were in the exhibition that took place in the mid 1920s. Following its display in Bremen, the show traveled to Hamburg and Berlin. This was a joint exhibition with works by the German expressionist Paula Becker-Modersohn (1878–1907) who had done part of her work at Worpswede. There was, however, a separate catalogue for each artist, and these remarks were included in the introduction to the Homer Boss catalogue:

> Boss's paintings present an extremely lively realism. They are simplified to create a powerful and original style. The basis of Boss's painting lies in a carefree trust of nature and her regularity in art.[97]

In addition to landscapes, seascapes, and a nude, the show included the portraits *Nordic Spring* (fig. 8) and *Portrait with Red Chair* (colorplate 3). The latter marked a significant stylistic venture for Boss. This is more a portrayal of emotional character than an idealization of beauty. Ada, wife of A. S. Baylinson, is painted in a loosely fitting garment whose folds intimate but do not delineate body contours. The viewer's attention is drawn to her pensive, almost brooding face beneath jet black hair. Muscular shoulders and arms give strength

Fig. 8. Nordic Spring, *ca. 1921, oil on canvas, 35¼ x 30⅜ in., private collection*

and solidity to the figure, yet the exposed flesh is painted with almost translucent skin tones that lend an eerie feeling to the figure. Forms do not simply adjoin one another but are outlined. The bright red chair and background of vividly colored wallpaper underscore the expressionistic qualities of this painting.

In appreciation of Roselius's kindness in arranging the German exhibition, Boss gave him a painting entitled *Beach at Monhegan*. Unfortunately, the Böttcherstrasse was totally destroyed during World War II, and, although it has since been rebuilt and houses much of the collection that was saved, the location of Boss's painting is unknown.[98]

Life In New Mexico

Among the students in Homer Boss's classes on Monhegan Island, where he continued to teach in the early 1920s, was Dorothy Kent, the sister of Rockwell Kent, one of Boss's artist friends during his early years in New York City. At their urging, he spent the summer of 1925 at one of the guest houses on Dorothy Kent's ranch in Alcalde, New Mexico.

Boss found the New Mexican climate and the seemingly limitless opportunities for artistic expression thoroughly agreeable to him. As soon as he was able to do so, he began to spend part of each year in New Mexico. Although he returned to New York City to teach winter sessions at the Art Students League, and even remained there for the summer sessions of 1926 and 1927, Boss's real allegiance now lay in the land of the cedar-bush desert, the eroded clay hills, and the ever-enduring distant mountains. This change of residence significantly affected his art in terms of subject matter and disposition of color.

After his marriage on November 23, 1927 to Suzanne Kutka, a student at the Art Students League, Boss and his wife spent summers at the San Juan Pueblo, New Mexico, in a house rented from a Tewa Indian.[99] Some time later, they bought a ranch at Santa Cruz, a little to the south of the pueblo. The shell of an old adobe house remained on the land (see *Mi Casa*, cat. no. 10), and, with minor assistance from Miguel, his Spanish neighbor, Boss rebuilt it into a home and studio. According to Suzanne, "His adobe floors were famous for they had a beauty that harmonized with the plain white-washed walls."[100] His restoration efforts were so authentic that a picture of the house was erroneously included in a history book with a caption claiming that it was one of the original houses of the conquistadors![101] The Bosses built a stockade-type cedar fence to screen the house from the road. Adorned as it was with a few dried-out cattle skulls and bones, the fence provided a colorful addition to a photographic essay by Gjon Mili depicting "Autumn in the Southwest" for *Life Magazine*.

A New Motif: The Indians of the San Juan Pueblo

Homer Boss was captivated by the dignity and integrity of the old Indians in the San Juan Pueblo, and many of them became his friends. The Indians returned his admiration with respect and affection, honoring Boss with the name *Quahtenbeh* "House of Color." Suzanne was called *Pahye-powi* "Summer Flower."[102]

Boss felt that the life of the Pueblo Indian in the

Southwest was almost ideal. In an interview published in the *New York Evening Post*, he remarked:

> Untouched by progress, they till their farms as their ancestors did. Their system of government is quite communistic. Land is allotted to each individual for life and reverts to the group at his death. The community work is divided among them, and a crier announces each day the names of men drawn for the day's community work.
>
> In winter they have a chance to indulge their love for carving, singing, and dancing. A whole family would often come to our ranch. The father gets out his drum, the tamba, and the children dance and sing. Song is a very vital part of their religion.
>
> There has been a lot of misinformation about these Indians. My wife and I have often read to our Indian friends articles published about them. I can assure you they were highly amused.[103]

Many fine Indian portraits resulted from these friendships. Both Homer and Suzanne sketched and painted the Indians in their ceremonial and informal dress. In 1932, the *New York Evening Post* rightly characterized Boss's Indian portraits as having "a majestic simplicity of character."[104]

Antonio Montoya (fig. 9), Boss's portrait of an old Indian who was going blind at the time he posed, has a thoughtful, poignant quality. Seated in a Windsor armchair with downcast eyes, Montoya is depicted against a red and blue striped Hopi blanket. His slightly bowed head allows two long thin black bound braids to hang over his yellow shirt. A multiple-beaded coral collar shows at the neck of the shirt, and he wears a large turquoise ring on each hand. His facial structure is strongly modeled, expressing both suffering and stoicism.

Don Ambrosio (fig. 10), one of San Juan's finest singers, is depicted as a powerfully built man who posed with striking beaded bands over his bare shoulder and around a blue blanket at his waist. A blue bead and abalone kosiki collar and red yarn ties on his braided hair add to the adornment of this dominant pueblo personality. The extension of the seated model beyond three sides of the painting's perimeter suggests Don Ambrosio's importance.

An American Gentleman (fig. 11), a fine character study of Santos Cruz, an eminent elder of San Juan, portrays a three-quarter view of Cruz wearing a maroon shirt and seated near the Bosses' fireplace. The position of his arms and hands suggests that he is not entirely at ease, and his look is brooding and distant. The Bosses' respect for their Indian friends is evident in the title of this portrait. In 1944, Boss painted *Governor (Santos) Cruz and Dancers* in front of some of the adobe houses of the pueblo. The Governor's tall figure wearing a lively green blanket with multicolored designs dominates the foreground while a row of male and female dancers and drummers adds diagonal interest behind him. Boss's talent for clarity of organization, the effects of light and shadow, and the harmonious arrangement of colors is fully evident in this ceremonial commemoration.

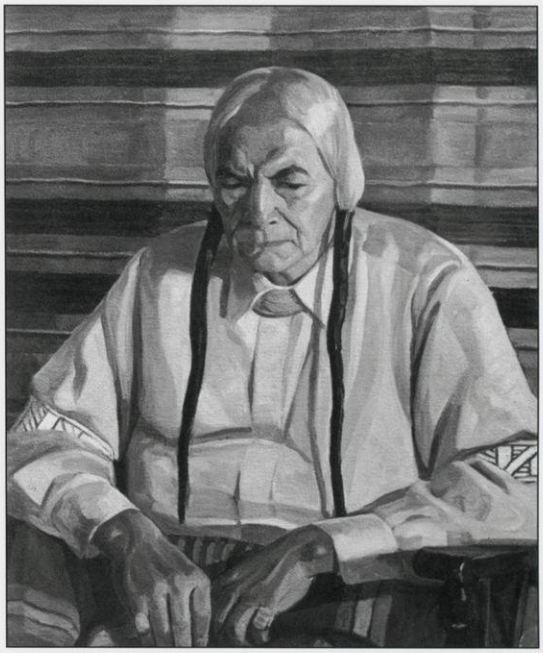


Fig. 9. Antonio Montoya, *1934, oil on canvas, 32 x 26 in., private collection*

A portrait of Encarnacion Montoya is entitled *Koh-tseh*, meaning "Yellow Buffalo." Koh-tseh was a healer and bone-setter, a masseur and a respected member of the Tribal Council. Years earlier he had visited Washington, D.C., with a committee of Indians and was obviously proud of having made the trip. During rest periods in posing he would

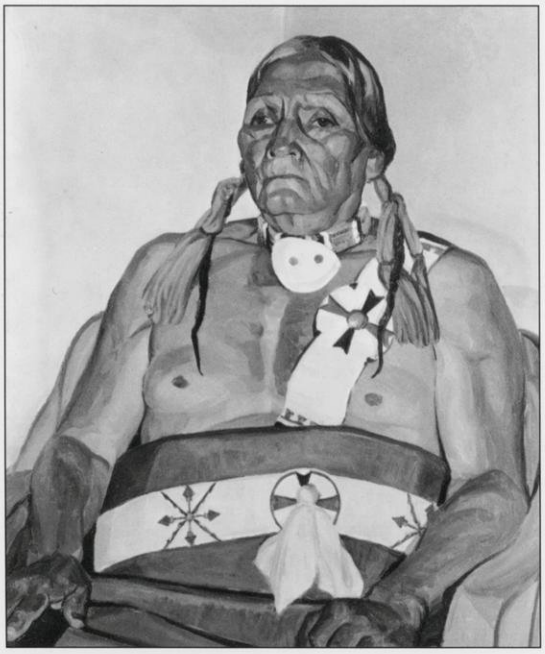


Fig. 10. Don Ambrosio, *1940, oil on canvas, 32 x 26 in., private collection*

Fig. 11. An American Gentleman, *1935, oil on canvas, 44 x 36 in., private collection*

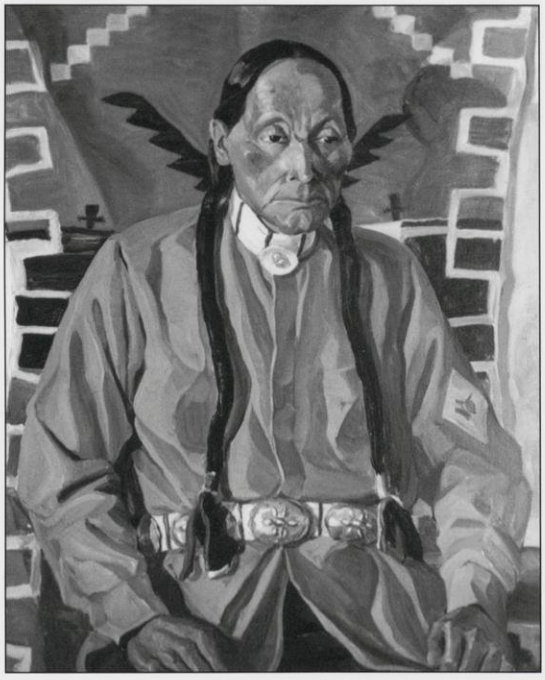


Fig. 12. Pueblo Council Member, *1930, oil on canvas, 32 x 26 in., location unknown*

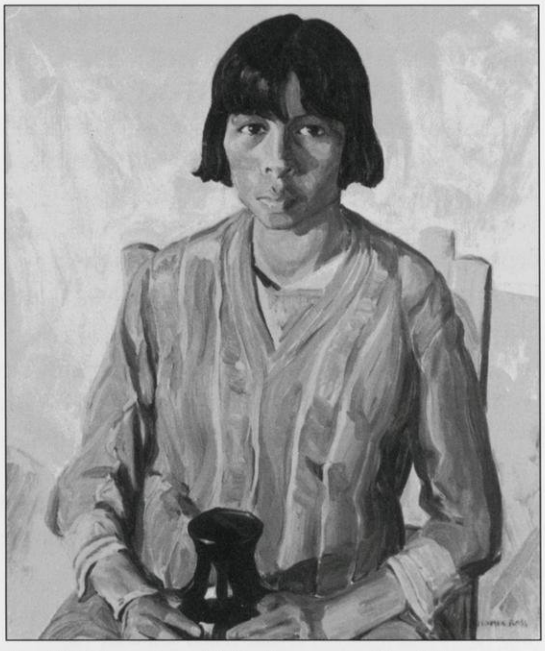


Fig. 13. Foh-sawi, *ca. 1930, oil on canvas, 32 x 26 in., private collection*

often start chanting, "Papa Washingtone, Papa Washingtone," while beating on his chest and doing a little dance step.[105] His portrait depicts an aged but fiercely proud man with braided hair flowing over a white pleated shirt. A rich blue blanket outlines his shoulders. The blanket backdrop has horizontal stripes of white, orange, and brown.

The white border design of a deep-red Navaho spirit blanket frames Jose Maria Cata, the subject of *Pueblo Council Member* (fig. 12). This striking portrait shows an Indian garbed in a red shirt topped by a ceremonial collar with an abalone shell and gathered at the waist with a hammered silver belt. His long black braids are bound in black. Lighting brings out the contours of the model's face, folds of the shirt, and sheen of the belt. This is a powerfully painted tribute to Cata, whose name *Nan-a-p'in* means "Aspen Mountain."

We know of fifteen Indian portraits that Boss painted: nine of men and six of women. One of the most personable of the women's portraits is of young Gertrude Cata, known as *Foh-sawi* (fig. 13), meaning "Snowflake." Seated before a plain adobe wall on an ocher-toned wooden chair, the girl gazes directly at the viewer with her luminous eyes. She wears a vertically striped orange and blue blouse and holds a black pottery jar. With dark bobbed hair and modestly reserved demeanor, this Snowflake is frozen forever in her youth.

The pottery that occasionally appears in Boss's paintings was native to that region of the Southwest. Having arrived in New Mexico before the land became a mecca for tourists, Homer and Suzanne had become friendly with Maria Martinez, the San Ildefonso potter who later achieved worldwide renown for her craftsmanship and "black on black" ware. Sometimes, Boss would use one of her bowls or large urns to convey a sense of naturalness or to serve as a focal point in portraits of his Indian friends.

Nude with a Navajo Blanket (cat. no. 20), which portrays a Caucasian woman, is made dramatic both by the pose of the model and the background materials of vividly colored blanket and blue-black tones of the pottery by Maria. Boss's skill as an anatomist is evident here as the underlying tensions of muscular action are visible under the delicate nuances of the sensitively modeled flesh.

Landscapes of New Mexico

Boss loved the landscape of New Mexico and painted it continually throughout his artistic life. It provided him the perfect setting to blend his training in realistic depiction of nature with more contemporary design. In the mesas, he found clear decorative forms that were highlighted with intense, dramatically contrasted colors. In infinitely diverse sculptured rock formations he exposed hues and contours which arrested the eye even as it swept across the foothills to the distant purple or snow-capped mountains. The skies above his New Mexican landscapes were often a radiant blue, untainted by pollution. When he depicted clouds, they were generally so highly stylized that they appeared unreal (*Rain*, fig. 14). Yet, people who have visited that area of the country can attest to the strangely contoured shapes that occasionally dominate the sky. Thus, although Boss might have simplified certain forms to their cubistic elements, these elements do exist naturally in the region, and this artist has captured their essence.

Some artists who were attracted to New Mexico in those early years were content to paint from vantage points convenient to the roadsides. Homer Boss was not. Strapping a canvas to the back of his horse's saddle and carrying a few sticks to serve as an easel, Boss would ride deep into the Indians' country (figs. 15 and 16). Remote regions around Santa Cruz were thus preserved on canvas in their unspoiled, awesome, expansive beauty. The paintings *Cedar Bush Hills* (colorplate 5), *Red Cliffs* (cat. no. 21], *Winding Road* also known as *Arroyo de la Morado* (fig. 17), *Desert Grandeur* (cat. no. 19), *Near Los Alamos*, and a myriad of others all bear witness to his personalized, yet faithful rendering of the New Mexican landscape.

Most of Boss's landscapes concentrated on the designs and vastness of the land itself. However, he occasionally included a small human element (*Solitude*, cat. no. 16), his adobe home (*Above the Ditch*, colorplate 7), or his treasured horses (*Pasture*

Fig. 14. Rain, *ca. 1932, oil on canvas, 30 x 36 in., private collection*

with Snow), thus lending rich insight to the way of life he and his wife enjoyed at that time.

New Mexico had revitalized Boss's interest in depicting the landscape at the same time that a resurgence of realism was appearing elsewhere in the nation. Gone were many of the avant-garde experiments of the post-Armory Show era, the gloomy pigments, and presentations of antisocial aspects of the cities that had occupied some American artists. The 1920s and 1930s saw the popularization of works by the American regionalist painters Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975), John Steuart Curry (1897–1946), and Grant Wood (1891/92–1942), who immortalized both the bucolic and industrial facets of midwestern life, or, in the case of Reginald Marsh (1898–1954)—one of Boss's former students—the jostling crowds and sometimes seamy scenes of New York City's lower East Side. The best work of the period combined the freer use of color that modernism advocated with a solid grasp of structural proficiency.[106] Many artists were again concerned with "the soil, its forms, its colors, its feelings, its humans."[107] Boss's natural inclination to record New Mexican landscapes and Indian friends just happened to coincide with these tendencies, and his work exemplified all that was admirable about the "new" emphases in art. His paintings have helped to preserve the character and color of the New Mexican region for posterity.

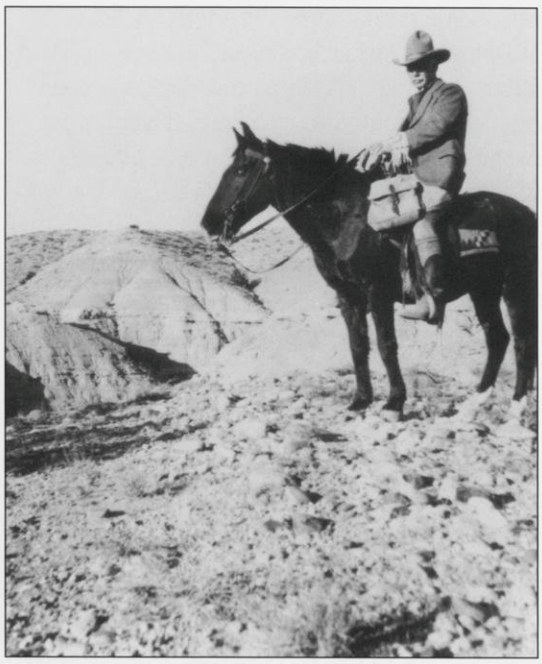


Fig. 15. Boss riding out for a day of painting

Watercolors and Woodcuts

In addition to his work with oils on canvas, Boss also depicted a few New Mexican landscapes in watercolor, continuing to work with the medium he had used occasionally while in Maine and Nova Scotia. Several of his northeastern watercolors were included as part of The Brooklyn Museum's exhibitions *Water Color Paintings, Pastels, and Drawings by American and European Artists* in 1925 and 1929.

While in the east, he had also designed and printed such woodcuts as *The Clamdigger*, *Fishing Boats*, and *The Dawn*. In the late 1920s, his New Mexican woodcuts added a new dimension to his interpretation of that region. Unlike his oil and watercolor landscapes which primarily focused on natural growth and terrain, the woodcut landscapes often featured a figure on horseback. A typical woodcut, *The Desert*, was included in *Fifty Prints of the Year* that had been chosen from nearly 1,000 submissions. These prints were exhibited at The American Institute of Graphic Arts in New York City and in sixty other cities throughout America in 1930. In the foreground of *The Desert* is a mesa dotted with sagebrush and juniper. A horse climbs

Fig. 16. Boss painting the New Mexico landscape

with deliberate steps from an arroyo that is banked by eroded formations that seem to flow from the dark mountains in the distance. A curiously vibrant feature is an aura of light that shimmers above the mountains before the night sky closes in. *Los Indios* (fig. 18) also features light above the far mountains—in this case, a magnificent sunset that dominates the sky with its full, far-reaching rays. A briskly stepping horse with a bareback Indian rider is momentarily highlighted at the top of a mesa. On the winding trail below, other Indian riders lead the way into the darkened valley.

One of Boss's prints represented the Southwest for *The United States in Pictures*, an exhibition of one-hundred contemporary prints at the Wehye Gallery in New York City in 1930. In that exhibition, several prints from each section of the coun try were chosen to make a composite picture of American life.

In 1932, four of Boss's woodcuts were exhibited at another print display in New York. *The New York Sun* reported that they dealt with New Mexican motifs and were "strong, vigorously handled blocks that reveal his feelings for design at its best."[108] Unfortunately, Boss was forced to give up printmaking soon thereafter, when his eyes began to bother him.

From April 18 to 30, 1932, Homer Boss exhibited fifteen oils and four watercolors, mostly from New Mexico, at the Midtown Galleries in New York City. This was the fourth one-man show at the Midtown and *The New York Sun* proclaimed:

> That most interesting cooperative venture, the Midtown Galleries, at 559 Fifth Avenue, seems to be gaining strength as the weeks go by—it has been in existence but a few weeks—and the current display certainly shows no falling off. Even at the risk of seeming unresponsive to some that have gone before, one is even inclined to consider this the best showing yet made. The customary one-man display is devoted to Homer Boss. Although Mr. Boss has been a teacher at the Art Students League for the last nine years and in 1916 was one of the incorporators of the Independent Society and of the Society of Modern Artists a little later, in recent years he has had little to do with exhibitions. During this period he has been spending his summers on a ranch in New Mexico, working out his artistic salvation alone. Now he appears as an accomplished craftsman with a matured manner of his own. His present display includes a number of portraits of Pueblo Indians, his neighbors in the West. If they seem chiefly worthwhile as ethnological documents it is doubtless because the Indian still is rather aloof to most of us—something, in fact, we fail to understand. So it is in his landscapes that the artist makes his most persuasive appeal. These give the arid West—its fantastic rock formations, its vivid, bizarre coloring, its towering squadrons of rainless clouds—a sense of reality rarely achieved in paint. If reality is what you want, here it is—reality intensified in these virile and knowingly organized canvases.[109]

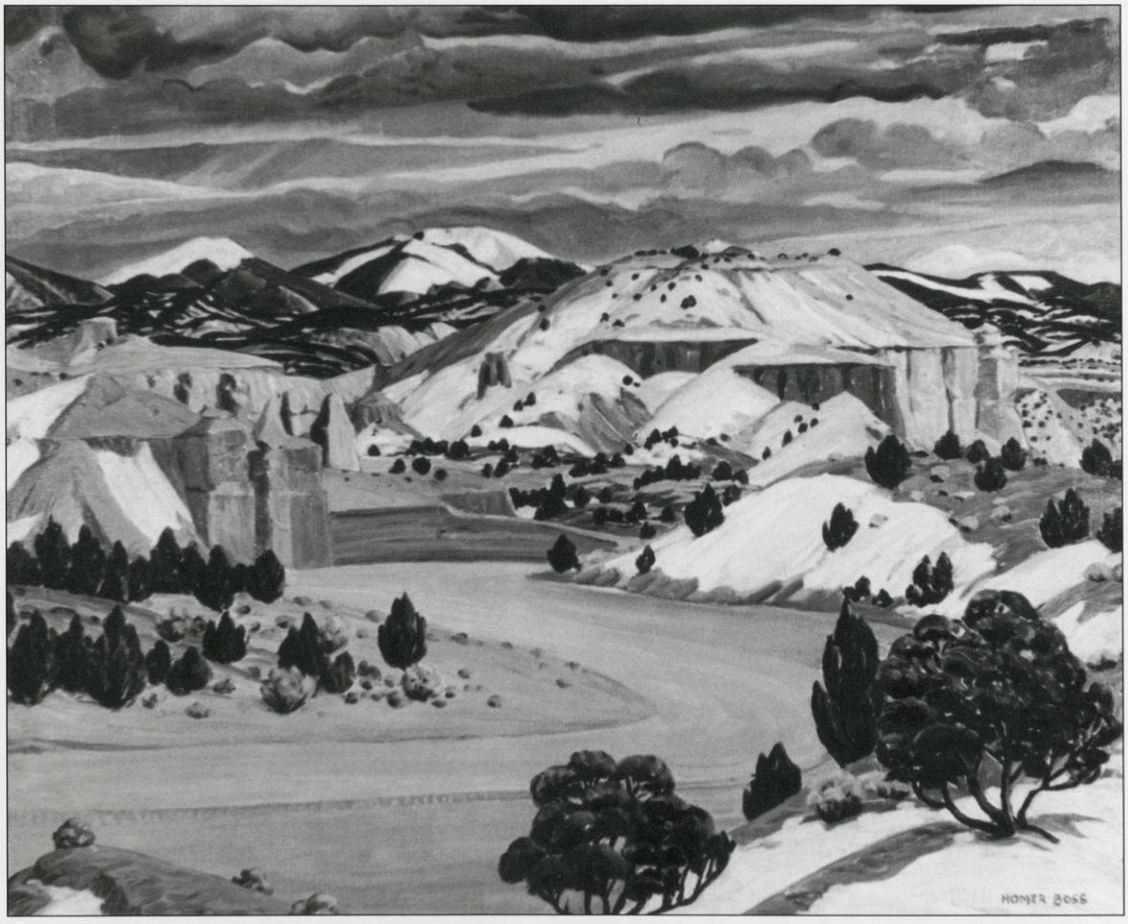


Fig. 17. Winding Road *also known as* Arroyo de la Morado, *1931, oil on canvas, 26 x 32 in., private collection*

The *New York Evening Post*'s reviewer was also responsive to the western landscapes:

> The incredible color and forms of this picturesque region are the theme of Boss's work which he has developed in almost panoramic designs, showing the sweep of the plains under the apparent closeness of the sky and the curious configuration of broken valleys, eroded hillsides and encircling mountains. Truth is stranger than fiction, so this unbelievable land is more fantastic than any imaginary world.[110]

Both *The New York Sun* and the *New York Evening Post* used *Sangre de Cristo* (cat. no. 11) as one of the illustrations for their articles. Filled with harmonious color, the painting depicts the Sangre de Cristo mountains in deep blues and greens while their tops are graced with violet-tinged snow. The color of the sky above the mountains progresses from a light yellow to graduated planes of blue, and finally to clear, brilliant blue. In the foreground of the painting, two large cedar bushes draw the viewer's eye into the red clay formations which become thickly sprinkled with growth as they fuse into the darker foothills. A tiny white morada, or chapel, is perched on a rounded gray hilltop overlooking a broad green valley in the central right side of the painting. While this landscape can impart serenity, it also illustrates the tumultuous forces of nature that carved out the beauties of that magnificent region.

Another one-man show by Boss was held at the Midtown Galleries from February 15 to March 4,

Fig. 18. Los Indios, *woodcut, 5 x 7 in., private collection*

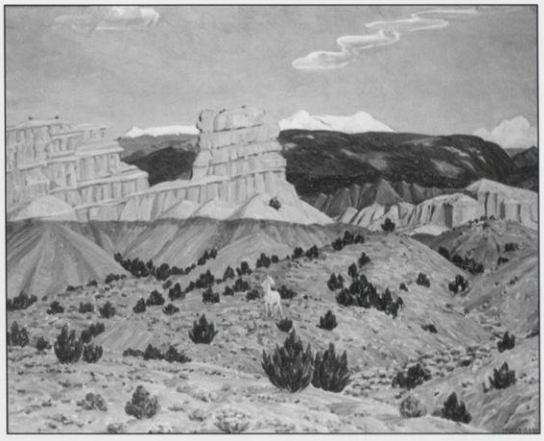


Fig. 19. Truchas *also exhibited as* Snow on Truchas, *ca. 1932, oil on canvas, 26 x 32 in., private collection*

1933. Nine canvases from New Mexico and three from Monhegan Island, Maine were on display, and again the exhibition received generous coverage by the media.

According to *Art Digest*, the New Mexican scenes gave New Yorkers "a glimpse of the colorful atmosphere and majesty of a land where a man's neighbor is his welcome companion, not just another obstruction in a subway door."[111]

The New York Sun reviewer Henry McBride attempted to explain the western scenery to his city audience:

> If you are interested in the arid West, here it is, with all its bizarre coloring, its blinding sunlight and its peculiar atmosphere—an atmosphere that takes a few liberties with local color and leaves distant objects almost as brilliant in hue as those close at hand. There is none of that convenient graying that veils the distance in localities nearer the sea. Everything is sharp, hard and metallically brilliant. This is the quality that Mr. Boss has caught to an extent, one is tempted to say, that no other artist has. This sort of thing is not the last word in art, of course, perhaps not the most desirable—but if truth to the essential character of the given scene is what you desire, here it is.
>
> Along with his success in this respect, the artist also shows a growing personal touch in his simplification of form and a completer coordination of the various elements of his composition. In one canvas even, "Dos Morados," the "space forms" of his clouded sky take on almost a cubistic air. Particularly vivid and effective is the artist's presentation of his New Mexican home—"Poco Tiempo." [This painting was reproduced in the article.] Other canvases that stand out impressively are "Rain," "Among the Hills" and "Morada of the Hilltop."[112]

The *New York Herald Tribune* reviewer was particularly interested in such Indian portraits as *Tehua Maiden*, young Gertrude Cata (also the subject of *Foh-sawi*, fig. 13) which illustrated the article, and *Niña*, a painting of Emily Cata as a child. The reviewer stated that "as a painter of human types of such picturesqueness and charm of character, he [Boss] is distinctly skilful as well as ingratiating."[113] Other reproductions of Boss's works included *Truchas* (fig. 19) which was featured in the gravure section of the *New York Evening Post*,[114] and *Sierra Alta* (cat. no. 17), which was reproduced in *Studio News* [115] and *Art Digest*.[116] The latter periodical quoted Howard Devree of *The New York Times* who had written of Boss,

> "He has struggled with the difficulty of conveying a miracle of nature, and that struggle must leave any artist disconsolate. But he has succeeded in presenting some of the amazing desert formations, and has produced cloud effects, contours of rock and brilliance of color calculated to cause the dwellers among artificial canyons of steel and stone to raise both eyebrows."[117]

Homer Boss relinquished his affiliation with the Midtown Galleries upon moving to New Mexico in 1933. And, although he later resumed teaching a

part of each year in New York City, he and Suzanne now called the ranch in Santa Cruz their permanent home.

Recollections

From 1933 to 1937 was a period of freedom for the Bosses. Unfettered by the demands of travel and teaching, they painted, worked on their adobe home, plowed and planted, and visited Old Mexico. Several distinguished landscapes and Indian portraits were painted during this hiatus from their former routines.

Although both Homer and Suzanne loved the desert and the naturalness of their way of life in Santa Cruz, it was necessary for them to return to New York City. Between 1937 and 1941, in order to make an adequate living, Homer again taught winter sessions at the Art Students League and the New York School of Applied Design for Women and, from 1939 to 1941, at the New York School of Fine and Applied Art (Parsons School of Design).[118] He conducted classes in painting and drawing as well as giving his series of anatomy lectures. Meanwhile, Suzanne taught art in the public schools and continued her own art studies.

While they were in New York, an artist friend of long-standing, D. Paul Jones, occasionally rented their Santa Cruz home. Homer had painted a portrait of *D. Paul Jones* (fig. 20) in 1935 in which Jones appears stern and rather austere in a black shirt and turtleneck. However, a softly draped Chimayo blanket with muted stripes behind the figure, and the sensitive modeling of the artist's hands make him seem more personable—as indeed he must have been, for Jones was well known for his interesting stories as well as his beautifully executed watercolors of Hopi Indian kachina dolls.[119]

Homer's schedule at the Art Students League during those later years in New York City included five evening classes a week of life drawing and composition. At this mature stage of his career, he was able to draw upon a wealth of experiences as a student, teacher, and accomplished artist. One of his students, Carol Mead Klonis, recalled some of the flavor of those evening sessions:

> I loved the class and worked with fierce concentration in order to win Homer's approval. He inspired all of his students. . . . He wanted us to think before we put down our brush strokes, and to concentrate on the color before putting it down on the canvas; to build the form in the round with carefully thought-out color, using broad, sharply defined brush strokes with no margin for error.
>
> We were instructed to paint with a very limited palette in class: cadmium red (light, medium, and deep), cadmium yellow, viridian green, ultramarine blue, allizarin crimson, and white. No earth colors were used. Homer advised us, "Never use black; it will lose its luster and go dead. Whistler's blacks cracked; they sank in and became gray." To avoid this, we were to make black by using allizarin crimson, ultramarine blue, viridian green, and cadmium deep red.
>
> Homer often cited the examples of the great Dutch master, Franz Hals, and remarked on how fresh and pure his paintings were after so many centuries. When I look at the portraits done by Homer of the old American Indian chiefs and the beautiful portrait of my husband, painted when Bernard was Homer's student, I feel that Homer painted very much in the manner of Franz Hals, and that Homer's magnificent portraits will stay as fresh and pure in color as long as the paintings of Franz Hals have.
>
> We painted from the nude four evenings a week, with Friday reserved for an anatomy lesson. Friday nights were the most exciting, for Homer would have a skeleton—which he jokingly called Mollie—brought into the classroom and placed alongside of the live model. The model was usually a male, as Homer did not think a female nude could show the muscles as well. Then Homer would shape the muscles with pieces of clay and place them on the skeleton, at the same time explaining the functions of the muscles and using the model as a demonstrator.[120]

The custom of meeting after the Friday evening sessions had continued through the years, with the Carnegie Restaurant and P. J. Clarke's on Third Avenue now being frequent sites. Beer and good conversation—ranging from modern art to the serious situation in Europe that eventually drew the United States into World War II—mingled with warm fellowship. Several of Homer's former students often joined the group, and it was here that

Carol Mead met her future husband, Bernard Klonis. Bernie had been the monitor in Homer's class from 1928 to 1932 and, as his assistant, had learned the principles of anatomy as handed down from Thomas Anshutz. In later years, Klonis devised his own method for teaching anatomy based on the knowledge acquired from Homer and taught life drawing, anatomy, and water color at the Art Students League and elsewhere. He was noted for his superb control over the watercolor medium, producing realistic work touched with fantasy and nostalgic qualities.

Fig. 20. D. Paul Jones, *1935, oil on canvas, 31⅞ x 25¾ in., Elvehjem Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Jon G. Udell in memory of Katherine Harper Mead, 1983.58*

Good friends traveled in the same circles, and John McPherson—who had accompanied Homer to Monhegan Island and Nova Scotia in earlier years and was now a strong watercolorist—and his wife, Sara Freedman McPherson—whose small realistic paintings in later times were to enliven the walls of many cottages on Monhegan Island[121]—were the witnesses at the Klonises' wedding in 1938. Four years later, the Klonises had a son, whom they named Homer Boss Klonis for the teacher and man they so admired. Many years later Homer Klonis and his wife named their daughter Suzanne, "for they hoped that she also might posses the wonderful quality of joy that Suzanne Boss had."[122]

When Homer announced in 1941 that he would no longer be returning to New York City to teach, he recommended Bernard Klonis as his successor at the Art Students League and the Parsons School of Design. Some of his most promising students at the Art Students League vowed to follow him to New Mexico; Bill Blackmer, who was an advertising director for the JC Penney Company, left New York, and after buying land near Santa Cruz, New Mexico, married, had a family, and took his paintings to Homer for criticism whenever he could. Two other male students, who were not as financially secure, started out for the Southwest to study with Homer. They were hitchhiking, hoping to find work in New Mexico, but their money ran out and they ended their adventure in a jail in Pennsylvania![123]

Now that Homer was back in New Mexico year-round, he devoted himself to painting and to working his bit of land. He had planted a fine apple orchard in earlier years and began to reap its harvest. In 1942, Homer and Suzanne busied themselves picking and selling their crop of over two-hundred-and-fifty bushels of apples. They saved some of the "seconds" for cider and also kept some choice apples for their winter pies.[124] After the strenuous years of teaching and painting in the city, the simplicity of life in New Mexico was refreshing and they loved it.

It was still necessary for them to have a steady income, however, and there was no program of art education in the neighboring New Mexican public schools. Accordingly, in 1943 and 1944, Suzanne spent the winters teaching in the East while living with relatives. The following year, she initiated an art education program in the Espanola, New Mexico schools and gratefully remained in that locale, teaching at first in the grade and junior high school, and later in the high school. She was recognized for her work in making the "Espanola High School art department one of the best in the state

of New Mexico" when the Espanola Valley Chamber of Commerce named her the "Outstanding Woman of the Year" in 1957.[125]

Meanwhile, Homer's health had declined due to emphysema which he had first developed while living in New York City. Occasionally he submitted works to the annual exhibitions sponsored by the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, but seemed to prefer to remain independent from the regular art circles in New Mexico. He continued to paint until 1946 and then devoted his strength to the cultivation of his apple orchard and land until 1950, when poor health prevented him from doing even that. Confined to a wheelchair as an invalid, Homer realized that the quiet demeanor maintained throughout his artistic career had succeeded not only in assuring his privacy, but also in isolating him from the recognition accorded to artists beside whom he had worked and students whom he had taught. On January 15, 1956, Homer died at his adobe home.

An obituary by Gustave Baumann showed great insight in describing the dignity and productivity of Homer Boss. Entitled "Homer Boss Filled Important Art Need," it was preceded by a large photo of Homer and an even larger reproduction of one of his paintings, the aged pensive Indian *Antonio Montoya* (fig. 9).

> Having heard of Homer Boss' passing away, I went out to his house in Santa Cruz to see Suzanne. Homer was gone, but his shoes were still there. Shoes are such expressive things. In them he had tramped over his apple orchard, inspecting blossoms or fruit, depending on the time of year, opened and closed the ditch-gates and performed all the endless chores a fruit ranch can think up for the owner. I believe he liked his orchard because apples are always apples even in a time when Art is not always Art.
>
> From over the years while Homer Boss was actively producing as an artist, there is filed away a long list of distinguished recognition both from abroad and here (I had thought of quoting it in part) but ultimately what can it mean more than that he lived his life adequately and for his time filled an important place in the art world, both as painter and instructor. Homer always felt he belonged to the Middle Ages when fundamentals and a long apprenticeship were a requisite for aspiring art students. Much of this he must have conveyed as instructor for many years at the New York School of Fine and Applied Arts and The Art Students League, as is evidenced by a devoted following.
>
> Somewhat violent towards changing times, he abhorred publicity which explains why so little was known of his presence here. It seems that he and John Sloan, another stormy petrel of the art world, but one not so averse to publicity, used to get into each other's hair, aided and abetted by Henri in whose school Homer was a faculty member until Henri died [should read until Henri *left*] when it became the Independent School under Homer's guidance.
>
> With all three of them gone now, let us hope they meet and greet each other affectionately to talk over the old days and see what can be done to start another school of Art in entirely new surroundings.[126]

Homer's cremated remains were buried on a hill overlooking his beloved ranch and the distant mountains he so knowingly portrayed on canvas. A large cross marks both his grave and Suzanne's, for she joined him there in 1976. The long adobe house and the aging orchard with its clumps of once-fruitful trees bordering the irrigation ditch remain in the Espanola Valley, standing in mute testimony to the loving, creative hands that fashioned them so long ago.

Notes

[1] Undated notice in the Blandford, Massachusetts area newspaper, found in the personal scrapbook of Homer Boss and now in possession of the author.

[2] Bennard B. Perlman, *The Immortal Eight* (New York: Exposition Press, 1962), 114.

[3] Katherine M. Roof, *The Life and Work of William Merritt Chase* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917), 277–311 passim.

[4] Perlman, *Immortal Eight*, 16.

[5] Guy Pène du Bois, *Artists Say the Silliest Things* (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1940), 89.

[6] Rockwell Kent in *Homer Boss, 1882–1956*, a memorial catalogue (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Art Gallery, 1956), unpaginated.

[7] Walter Pach, "Homer Boss," *Shadowland, Classic and Motion Picture Magazine* 4? (1922). I am indebted to Edith Calkins Murphy Baxter, a niece of Homer Boss, for hand-copying this article from a decaying magazine.

[8] Perlman, *Immortal Eight*, 202. The actual term "Ashcan School" did not appear in print until 1934 when Holger Cahill and Alfred H. Barr, Jr. used it in their book *Art in America in Modern Times* (New York: Reynel and Hitchcock, 1934). William Innes Homer states in *Robert Henri and His Circle* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1969), 230, that the term may have been voiced in the late twenties and early thirties by artists and critics in New York.

[9] Emmanuel Bénézit, *Dictionnaire des Peintres, Sculpteurs, Dessinateurs et Graveurs* 10 vols. (Paris: Gründ, 1976), vol. 2, 195.

[10] Florence N. Levy, ed., *American Art Annual* 8 (New York: American Art Annual, Inc., 1911), 185. This source lists these *sixteen* men who exhibited as The Fifteen: Rockwell Kent, Julius Golz, John Koopman, Arnold Friedman, Karl [Carl] Sprinchorn, L. T. Dresser, George Bellows, Prosper Inverniggi [Invernizzi], Edward Hopper, Glenn O. Coleman, Edward Keef [Keefe], G. L. Williams, Harry R. Dougherty, Walter Pach, Guy Du Bois, and Homer Boss.

[11] Bruce St. John, ed., *John Sloan's New York Scene* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965).

[12] Perlman, *Immortal Eight*, 156–60 passim.

[13] Letter from Bennard B. Perlman to the author, 11 December, 1978.

[14] Perlman, *Immortal Eight*, 181–82 passim.

[15] J. Nilsen Laurvik, "Significance of the Exhibition of the Pennsylvania Academy—Canvases Shown More Satisfying Than the Sculptured Exhibits," *New York Times*, 26 January 1908.

[16] Letter from Helen Hodgskin to the author, 7 April 1978.

[17] Philip L. Hale, "Boston Art Shown in Philadelphia," *The Boston Herald*, 1908. Located in Boss's scrapbook.

[18] "Benson Gets Temple Medal at the Academy," unidentified clipping in Boss's scrapbook, dated 18 January 1908.

[19] Perlman, *Immortal Eight*, 192.

[20] Walter Pach in *Homer Boss, 1882–1956*, unpaginated.

[21] Letter from Mrs. Emil Holzhauer to the author, 28 February 1978.

[22] Letter from Emil Holzhauer to William Innes Homer, postmarked 6 July 1964 as quoted in Homer, *Robert Henri and His Circle*, 161.

[23] Randall Davey in *Homer Boss, 1882–1956*, unpaginated.

[24] Perlman, *Immortal Eight*, 195.

[25] Homer, *Robert Henri and His Circle*, 153.

[26] Joseph Edgar Chamberlin, "With the Independent Artist," *The Evening Mail*, 4 April 1910.

[27] Emma S. Bellows, *The Paintings of George Bellows* (New York: Knopf, 1929), section of paintings unpaginated.

[28] Robert Henri, "The New York Exhibition of Independent Artists," *Craftsman* 18 (May 1910): 168.

[29] Chamberlin, *The Evening Mail*, 4 April 1910. The last sentence was indeed prophetic, for in 1960, the Delaware Art Center sponsored the *Fiftieth Anniversary of the Exhibition of Independent Artists in 1910* and reproduced the original catalogue along with a commentary concerning the organization of that exhibition.

[30] The contractual agreement read: "New York—May 27, 1910: After June 1, 1910 the equipment on the premises of the Henri School of Art, being easels, stools, boxes, chairs, stands, lighting arrangements, etc., become the property of Homer Boss. The transference of ownership being made in consideration of his intention to carry on the School from that date. The School is entirely out of debt of any kind at this date—June 1, 1910—and it is understood that from this date Robert Henri will be in no way concerned with the School, its business or management except he be employed as Instructor on salary in which case his connection will be only that of an employee. It is further understood between Robert Henri and Homer Boss that the present name "Henri School of Art" will be retained as title of the School until such time as the said Robert Henri may see fit to withdraw his name from the title—or the said Homer Boss may see fit to withdraw the same—

That the photographs framed and unframed now on the premises remain as a loan to the School subject to the demand at any time of Robert Henri. That two drawings framed, one of a woman standing by Julius Golz and one of a man seated by Homer Boss remain in like manner subject to the demand of Robert Henri. Likewise a portable reflector for electric light. (1). It is further understood that during the season 1910–1911 Robert Henri is to instruct as per catalog of this date, one day per week at a salary of $100.00 per month, payable each month.—It is understood that Robert Henri will return from abroad as near Oct. 1st 1910 as possible, to begin his instruction on the first Friday thereafter. It is understood that the season 1910–1911 terminates May 27th 1911.

[signed] Robert Henri Homer Boss

[31] Florence N. Levy, ed., *American Art Annual* 8 (New York: American Art Annual, Inc., 1911), 60.

[32] Florence N. Levy, ed., *American Art Annual* 9 (New York: American Art Annual, Inc., 1911), 301.

[33] Letter from Clara McPherson Reiss to the author, 10 October 1978.

[34] Notes from Carol Mead Klonis to the author, December 1978.

[35] "Canvases Typify Art of America," *The Detroit News* (17 February 1911).

[36] "Exhibition of Contemporary American Art Open at the Art Museum," *The Detroit Journal* (18 February 1911).

[37] "Art Notes," *The Evening Post*, 25 March 1911.

[38] "Paintings Shown by 'Insurgents'—Twelve Carefully Chosen Exponents of Independent Art Are Represented in Exhibition," unidentified newspaper clipping in Boss's scrapbook.

[39] Joseph Edgar Chamberlin, "With the 'Independents,' a Somewhat Extraordinary Art Exhibition with Real Stuff in It—Good Pictures by Luks, Davies, Kent and Others—A Glance at the Extremists," unidentified newspaper clipping [*The Evening Mail*?] in Boss's scrapbook.
[40] "Paintings Shown by 'Insurgents.'"
[41] "Twelve Independent Artists," *Vogue* (25 April 1911): 104.
[42] "Art Notes."
[43] Joseph Edgar Chamberlin, "With the Independents."
[44] "Seen in the World of Art," *The [New York] Sun*, (Sunday, 2 April 1911). *A Woman of the East* illustrated the article.
[45] "Seventh MacDowell Group," *American Art News* (17 January 1912). Found in Boss's scrapbook.
[46] James B. Townsend, "Penn. Academy Exhibit (Second Notice)," *(American) Art News*, an undated newspaper clipping in Boss's scrapbook.
[47] "Representative Work by Contemporary Artists in the Exhibition of the Pennsylvania Academy," *The New York Times*, (Sunday, 4 February 1912).
[48] See Homer, *Robert Henri and His Circle*, 184–89, for a comprehensive discussion of Hardesty Maratta's system of color harmonies.
[49] Letter from George Bellows to Hardesty Maratta, 4 March 1913, Bielenberg Company advertisement, *International Studio* 61, (June 1917): 15.
[50] Letter from Emil Holzhauer to William I. Homer, postmarked 6 July 1964.
[51] *International Studio* 45 (February 1912): 10, included an advertisement for the "Henri School of Art: season 1911–1912." An advertisement appeared in volume 46, June 1912, 7, for the "Monhegan Summer Class, Independent School of Art (Henri School)." Thus, the controversy between Henri and Boss must have occurred in the early months of 1912, and the officially advertised operation of the Independent School began with the summer class of 1912.
[52] In 1963, after the Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition of the Armory Show was held at the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute in Utica, New York, the nearly 400 paintings, drawings and sculpture that were traced and exhibited there traveled once more to their original setting at the Armory of the Sixty-ninth Infantry, Lexington Avenue, Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth streets, New York City, for another anniversary exhibition. The latter was a benefit exhibition for the Henry Street Settlement's creative arts programs in New York City.
[53] Barbara Rose, *American Art Since 1900* rev. ed. (New York: Praeger, 1975), 31. The renaming was attributed to the sculptor Gutzon Borglum, later renowned for his statue of Lincoln in the Capitol rotunda in Washington, D.C., and his work on the heads of the four Presidents (Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt) at the Mount Rushmore National Monument in South Dakota.
[54] "Art in New York This Season," *Craftsman* 24 (April 1913), 134–36.
[55] Letter from Emil Holzhauer to William I. Homer, postmarked 6 July 1964.
[56] Lloyd Goodrich, *Yasuo Kuniyoshi* (New York: Published for the Whitney Museum of American Art by Macmillan, 1948), 8.
[57] I am indebted to Edith Calkins Murphy Baxter, a niece of Homer Boss, for hand-copying these excerpts from the Independent School catalogue.
[58] Marta Rossetti Batista, "Anita Malfatti e o início da arte moderna no Brasil" (M.A. thesis, University of São Paulo, Brazil, 1980), 78. I am grateful to Mrs. and Dr. Paulo Otto, 1993–94 visiting professor of genetics at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, for obtaining a copy of the dissertation as well as a catalogue from a 1977 exhibition of Malfatti's work in which they translated a biography of the artist. I am further indebted to Professor Mary Lou Daniel of the UW–Madison Department of Spanish and Portuguese for translating pertinent sections of the dissertation.
[59] Batista, "Anita Malfatti," 87.
[60] Batista, "Anita Malfatti," 87.
[61] Mario da Silva Brito, *Antecedentes da Semana de Arte Moderna* in *Historia do Modernismo Brasileiro*, vol. 1, 2d ed. (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Civilização Brasileira, 1964), 44–46. I am indebted to Professor Mary Lou Daniel for translating these pages.
[62] Letter from Helen Hodgskin to the author, postmarked 7 April 1978.
[63] "Homer Boss," *The New York Times* (21 May 1916), 10.
[64] Batista, "Anita Malfatti," 106.
[65] Batista, "Anita Malfatti," 92.
[66] "Teachers College Students Exhibit Their Work," *The New York Times Magazine* (28 May 1916).
[67] "Teachers College Students. . .," *The New York Times Magazine* (28 May 1916).
[68] Theodore Lynch Fitz Simons, "New York Art Schools and Their Methods," *Art World* 1 (March 1917): 435–36.
[69] Morris Kantor, "Ends and Means," *American Magazine of Art* 33 (March 1940): 140.
[70] *American Art Annual*, ed. Florence N. Levy, provided the following statistics for the Henri School of Art and the Independent School of Art. In 1910–11 the tuition for eight months at the Henry School was $60 for the 231 students enrolled and in 1911 it was $144 for the 160 students; from 1914 through 1917 there were only 80 students and the tuition for 1917 had become $55 for mornings, $60 for afternoons, and $35 for evenings.
[71] Homer, *Henri and His Circle*, 173.
[72] Letter from Mrs. Emil Holzhauer to the author, 21 March 1978.
[73] I am grateful to Dr. Clark Marlor, author of *Society of Independent Artists: 1917–1944* (Madison, Conn.: Sound View Press, 1990) for sending a photograph of *The Dawn* and a list of Boss's works exhibited at the Society of Independent Artists.
[74] Homer, *Robert Henri and His Circle*, 1969), 170.
[75] James N. Rosenberg, "The Womb and the Cemetery," *International Studio* 73 (April 1921): 44–51.
[76] Walter Pach, "The Independents," *Freeman* 7 (18 April 1923): 135–37.
[77] This section is based on the book *Between Dawn and Sunrise*, selections from the writings of James Branch Cabell, chosen with an introduction and initiatory notes by John Macy (New York: McBride, 1930), 122–25.
[78] Macy introduction to Cabell, xiii.
[79] Paul Rosenfeld, "The Academy Opens its Doors," *New Republic* 26 (4 May 1921): 290–91.
[80] Thomas Jewell Craven, "The Awakening of the Academy," *Dial* 70 (June 1921): 673.
[81] Craven, "Awakening," 673.

[82] Irving Sandler, *Paul Burlin* (New York: American Federation of Arts, 1962), 6–7.
[83] Barbara Rose, *American Art Since 1900* (New York: Praeger, 1975), 57.
[84] Milton Brown, *American Painting from the Armory Show to the Depression* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1955), 82.
[85] Florence N. Levy, ed., *American Art Annual* 20 (New York: American Art Annual, Inc., 1924).
[86] Notes made by Suzanne K. Boss.
[87] From the introduction to the catalogue of the Art Students League of New York, 1978–79.
[88] Catalogue of the Art Students League of New York, 1932–33, 13.
[89] Catalogue of the Art Students League of New York, 1937–38, 24.
[90] Letter from Anne K. McCosh to the author, 25 January 1978.
[91] Phyllis Barton, *Cecil C. Bell* (Kansas City, Mo.: McGrew Color Graphics, 1976), 141. However, Homer Boss's figure was drawn with considerable artistic license.
[92] Letter from Katherine Hubbell Breese to Homer Boss, 15 July 1928.
[93] Notes made by Suzanne K. Boss.
[94] "Wayside Gallery Exhibit Like Family Showing," *Nyack New York News* (29 June 1933).
[95] Stewart Klonis in *Homer Boss, 1882–1956*, unpaginated.
[96] I am indebted to Helen Hodgskin of Zurich, Switzerland, for much of the information in this section has been excerpted from her letter postmarked 10 April 1978.
[97] *Gemälde-Ausstellung Homer Boss*. I am indebted to Jane Peters, professor of art history, University of Kentucky, Lexington for the English translation.
[98] Letter to the author from Edgar H. Puvogel, director, Böttcherstrasse, Bremen, Germany, 6 February 1979.
[99] Suzanne K. Boss: a short unpublished biography of Homer Boss.
[100] From notes made by Suzanne K. Boss.
[101] "Mrs. Boss Leaves E. H. S.," *The Hornet's Nest*, student newspaper of Espanola High School, Espanola, New Mexico, (24 May 1961).
[102] Notes by Suzanne K. Boss.
[103] "Painter of Indians Lauds Pueblo Life," *New York Evening Post* (14 May 1932).
[104] *New York Evening Post* (23 April 1932), 18.
[105] Notes by Suzanne K. Boss.
[106] Marshall B. Davidson, *The American Heritage History of the Artists' America* (New York: American Heritage, 1973), 300.
[107] Dorothy Grafly, "Pennsylvania Academy—128th Annual," *American Magazine of Art* 26 (March 1933): 147. Found in Boss's scrapbook.
[108] "Midtown Tries Print Display," *The New York Sun* (22 June 1932).
[109] "The West Revealed by Homer Boss," *The New York Sun* (21 April 1932).
[110] *New York Evening Post* (23 April 1932), 18.
[111] "Homer Boss Shows New York the Southwest," *Art Digest* 7 (1 March 1933): 15.
[112] "Art Displays of Varied Aim," *The New York Sun* (28 February 1933).
[113] "Western Themes Shown By Homer Boss," *New York Herald Tribune* (26 February 1933).
[114] *New York Evening Post* (1 March 1933).
[115] *Studio News*, (April 1933). Found in Boss's scrapbook.
[116] "Homer Boss Shows New York the Southwest," 15.
[117] "Homer Boss Shows New York," quoting Howard Devree, "In the Galleries," *The New York Times* (19 February 1933).
[118] I am indebted to Christiane C. Collins, librarian (1978), Adam L. Gimbel Library, Parsons School of Design, for her help. Now called Parsons School of Design (after its founder, Frank Alvah Parsons), the institution was known as the New York School of Fine and Applied Art when Boss taught there, and the New York School of Art when Boss received his early training there from William Merritt Chase and Robert Henri.
[119] Letter from Anne K. McCosh to the author, 14 February 1978.
[120] Notes made by Carol Mead Klonis, December 1978.
[121] Included in a memorial tribute to Sarah McPherson written by her grandson, Robert Reiss, January 1978.
[122] Notes made by Carol Mead Klonis, December 1978.
[123] I am grateful to Carol Mead Klonis for her generous personal account of Homer's activities at the Art Students League in the late nineteen thirties and how his life influenced the lives of his friends.
[124] Letter from Suzanne K. Boss to Anne K. McCosh, 8 November 1942.
[125] "Four Win Recognition by Espanola Valley Chamber," *The Rio Grande Sun*, Espanola, New Mexico (27 March 1958).
[126] Gustave Baumann, "Homer Boss Filled Important Art Need," *The New Mexican* (22 January 1956).

ILLUSTRATED CHECKLIST
OF THE EXHIBITION

Colorplate 1
Young Woman in White, 1910
Oil on canvas, 74 x 36 in.
Private collection

Colorplate 2
A Study (Land and Sea), 1912
Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in.
Private collection

Colorplate 3
Portrait with Red Chair, 1925
Oil on canvas, 30 x 24 in.
Hunter Museum of Art, Chattanooga, Tenn.
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla, Jr., 1992.20

Colorplate 4

Golden Reverie, 1925

Oil on canvas, 32 x 26 in.

On loan to Elvehjem Museum of Art, 2.1987

Colorplate 5
Cedar Bush Hills, ca. 1929
Oil on canvas, 20 x 24 in.
Private collection

Colorplate 6
Young Woman in Pink Shawl, 1929
Oil on canvas, 32 x 26 in.
Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. H. Earl Hoover II

Colorplate 7
Above the Ditch, ca. 1934
Oil on canvas, 22 x 26 in.
Private collection

Colorplate 8

Las Truchas in White, ca. 1936

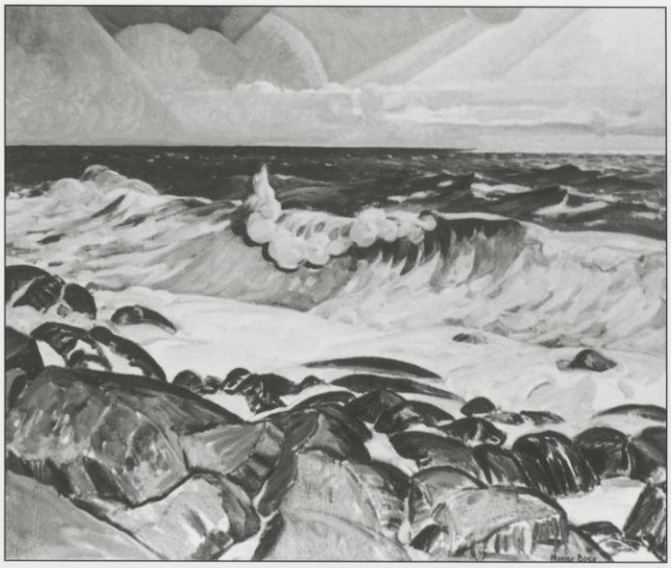
Oil on canvas, 22 x 26 in.

Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla, Jr.

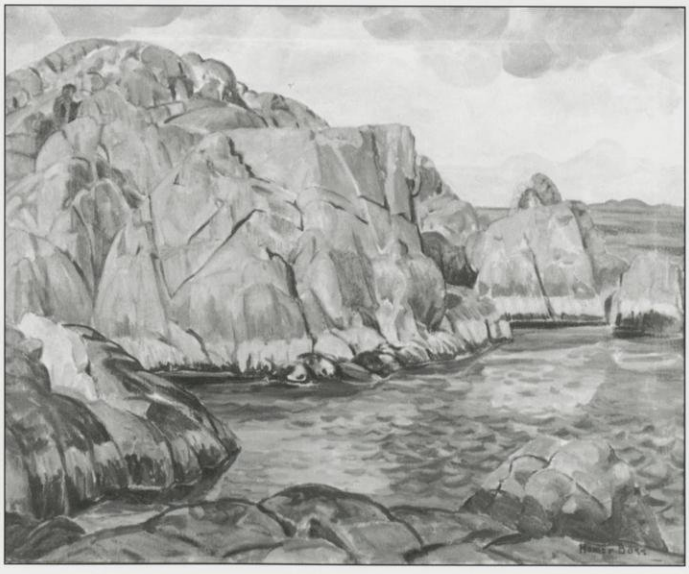
1
Young Woman in Black, 1910
Oil on canvas, 74 x 35¾ in.
Elvehjem Museum of Art
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Jon G. Udell
in memory of Suzanne and Homer Boss, 1978.18

2
Island Pines, ca. 1911
Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in.
Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla, Jr.

3
Portrait of Morris Kantor, ca. 1917
Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 in.
Milwaukee Museum of Art
Gift of Susan and Jon Udell

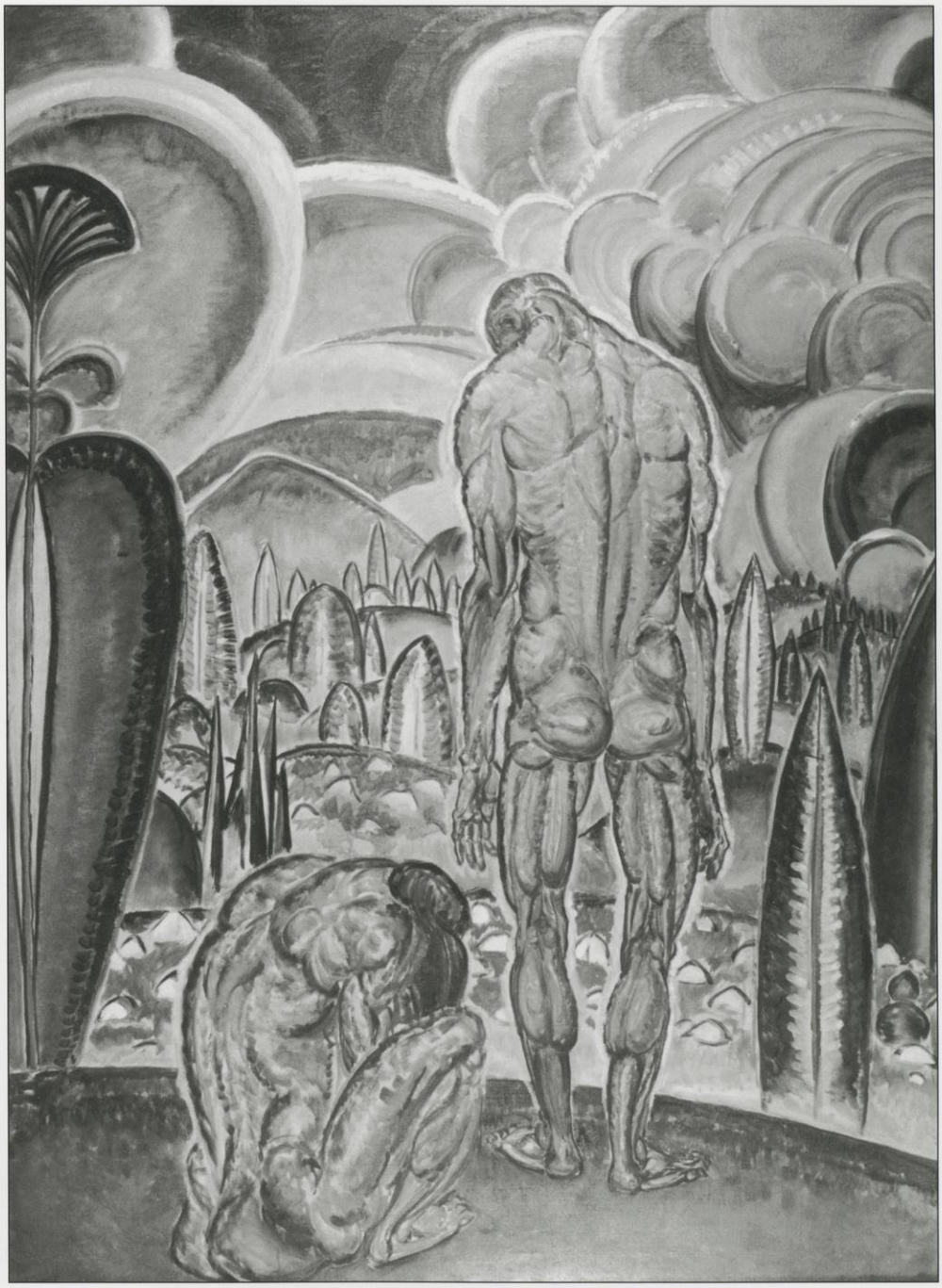


4
Breaking Wave, ca. 1920
Oil on canvas, 30 x 36 in.
Private collection



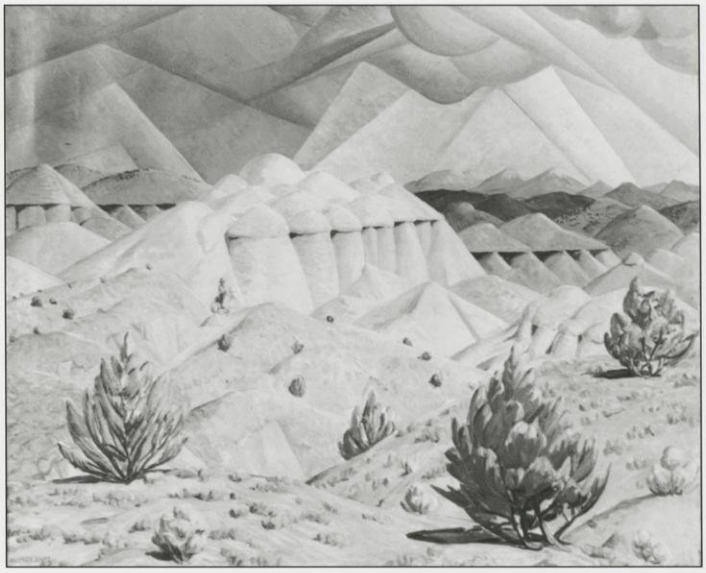
5
Rock at Monhegan, ca. 1920
Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in.
Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla, Jr.

6
Girl in Yellow, ca. 1920s
Oil on canvas, 74 x 36 in.
Private collection

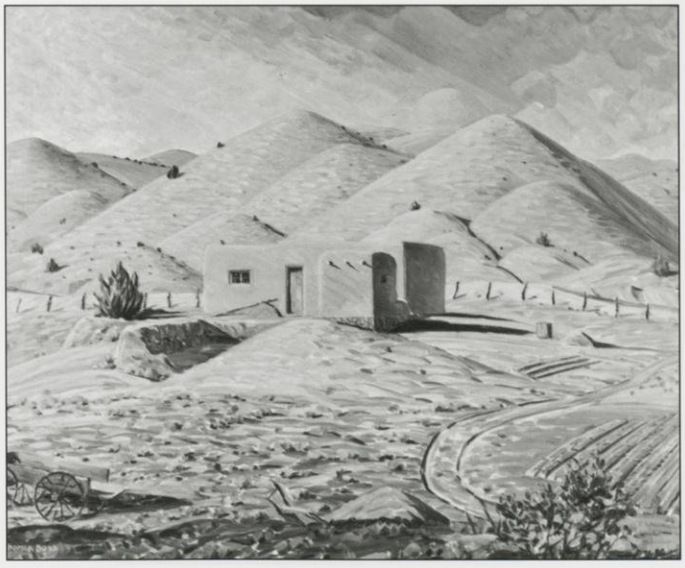


7
Genesis, ca. 1924
Oil on canvas, 73½ x 54 in.
Madison Art Center, Madison, Wisconsin
Gift of Susan and Jon Udell

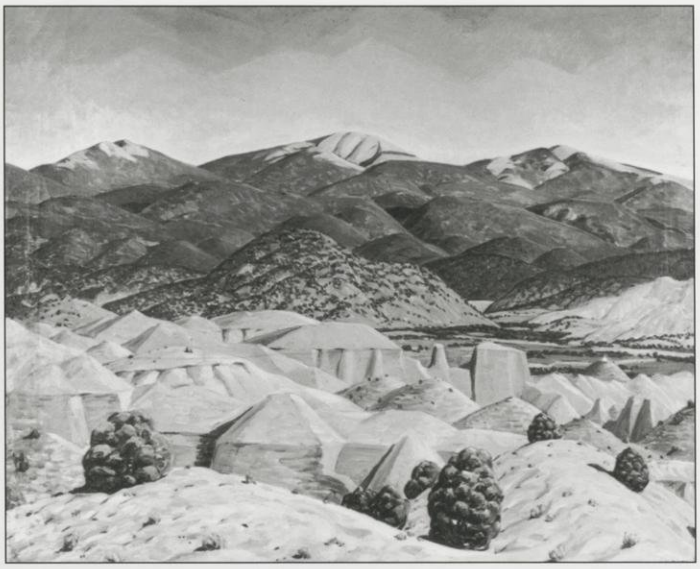
8
Portrait of Mary, ca. 1925
Oil on canvas, 36 x 30 in.
Elvehjem Museum of Art
Gift of Susan and Jon Udell 1992.364



9
Temples of the Desert, ca. 1925
Oil on canvas, 30 x 36 in.
Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla, Jr.

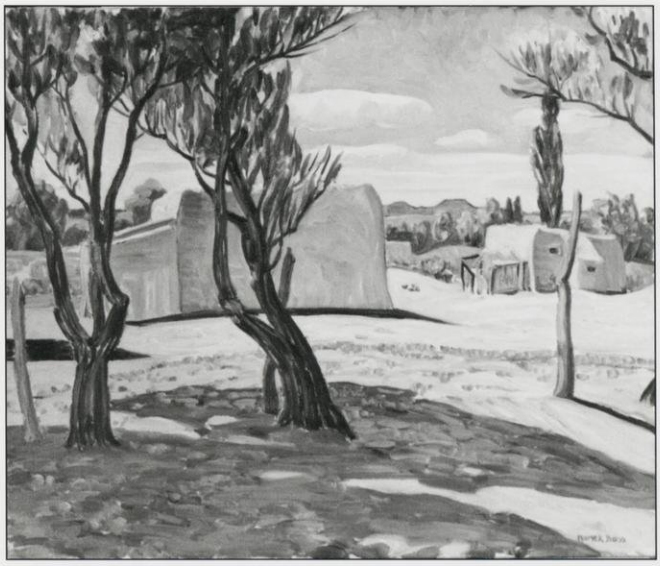


10
Mi Casa, ca. 1930
Oil on canvas, 26 x 32 in.
Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla, Jr.



11
Sangre de Cristo, ca. 1931
Oil on canvas, 26 x 32 in.
Private collection

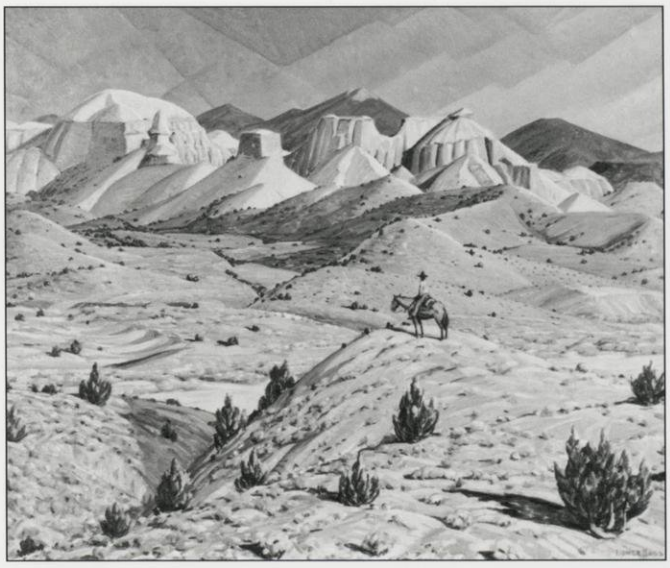
12
Tahm-pi-oh, 1931
Oil on canvas, 32 x 26 in.
Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla Jr.



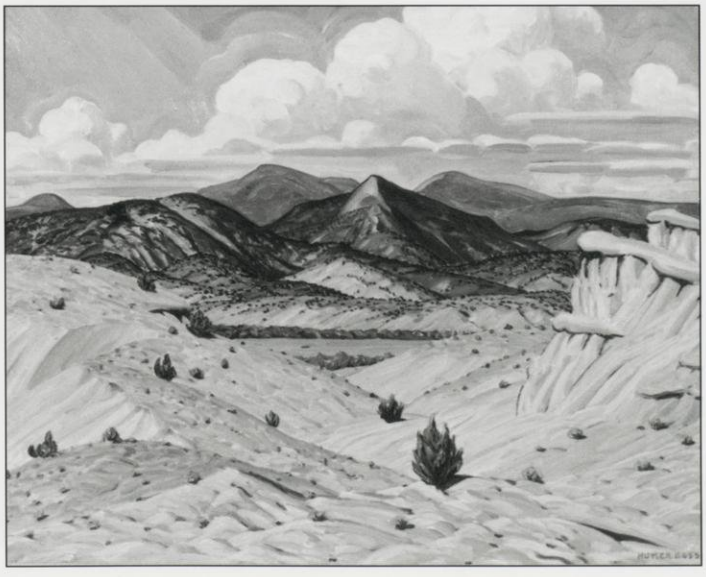
13
Carlotta's House, ca. 1931
Oil on canvas, 22 x 26 in.
Private collection

14
Desert Castles, ca. 1931
Oil on canvas, 26 x 32 in.
Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla, Jr.

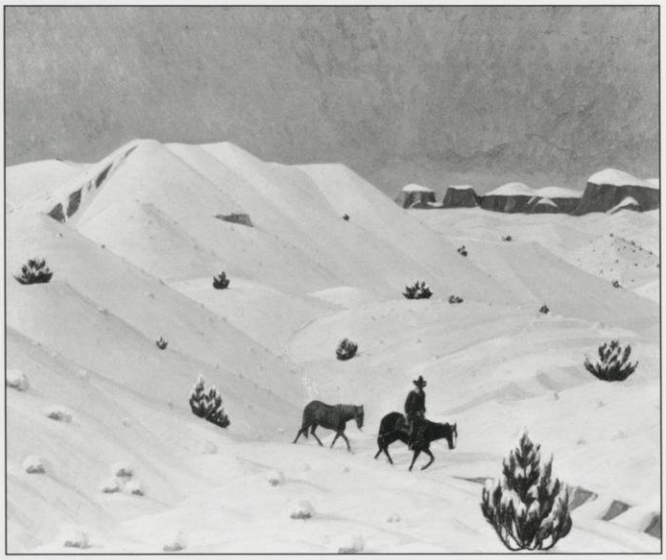
15
Pueblo Indian, ca. 1931
Oil on canvas, 32 x 26 in.
Collections of the Museum of Fine Arts,
Museum of New Mexico, Museum purchase by
special acquisitions fund



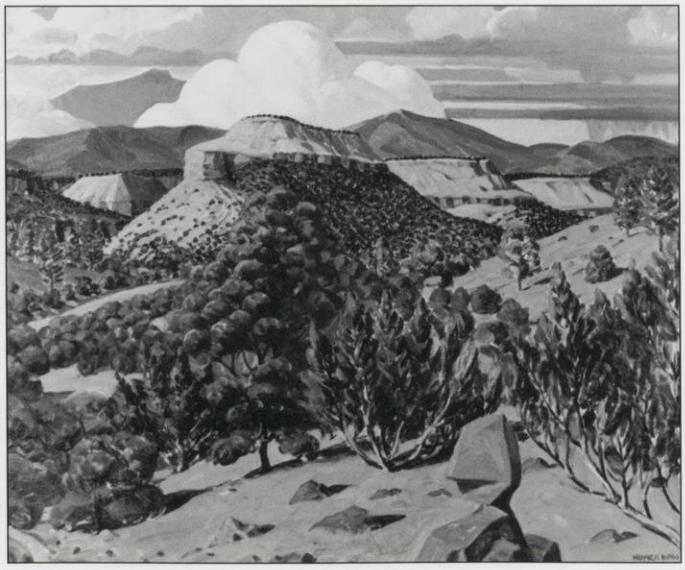
16
Solitude, 1931
Oil on canvas, 30 x 36 in.
Courtesy Mrs. Peter J. Smykla



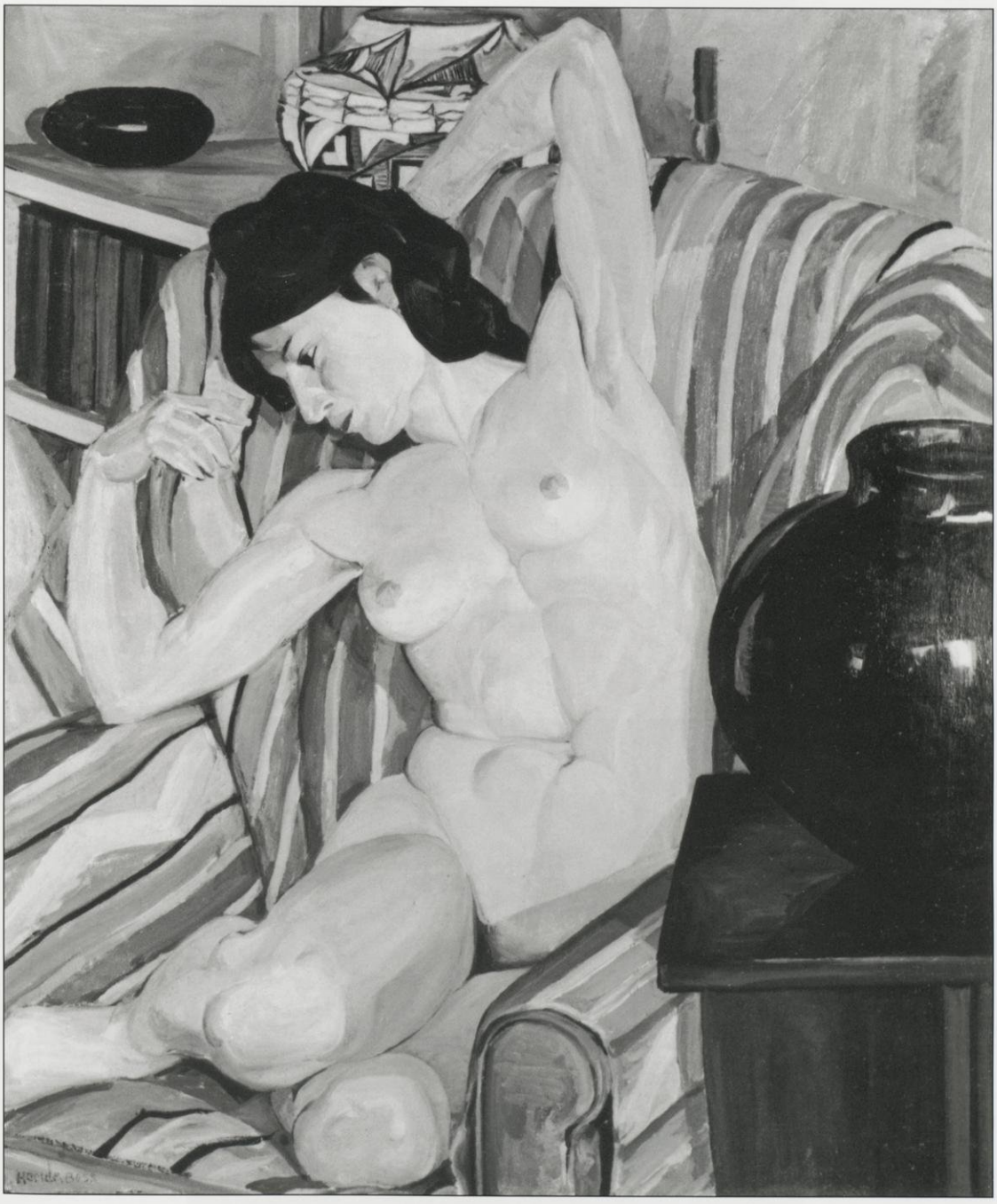
17
Sierra Alta, ca. 1932
Oil on canvas, 26 x 32 in.
Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla, Jr.



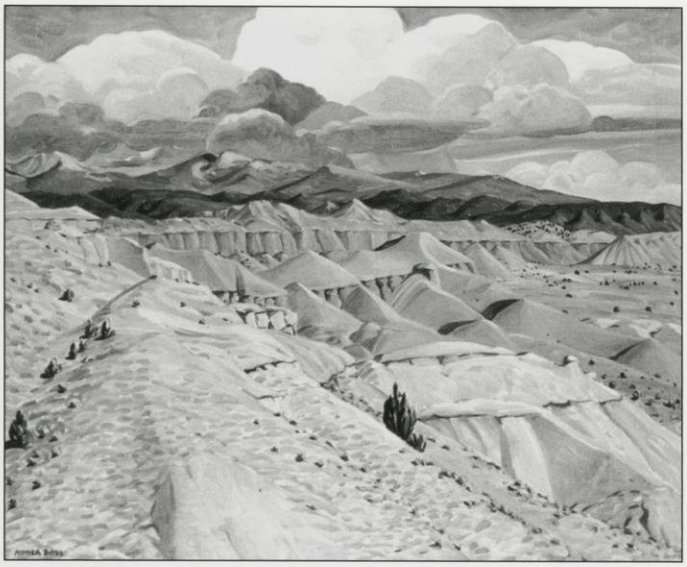
18
Snow, 1933
Oil on canvas, 30 x 36 in.
Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla, Jr.



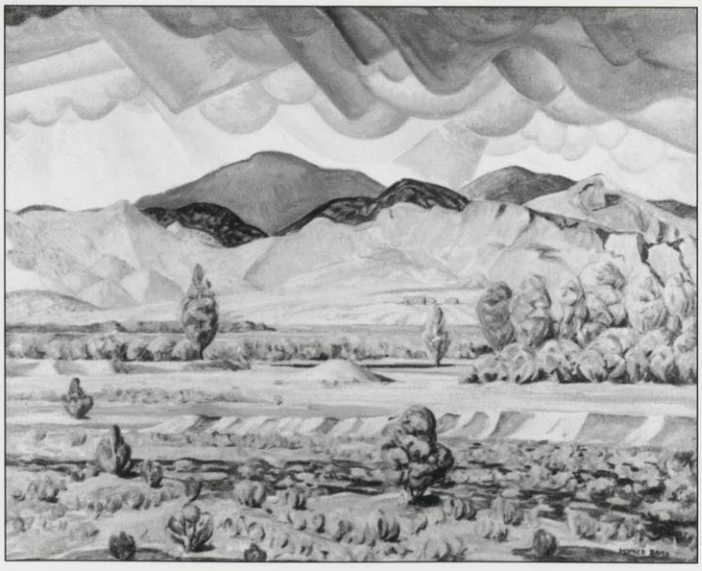
19
Desert Grandeur, 1935
Oil on canvas, 26 x 32 in.
Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Smykla, Jr.



20
Nude with Navajo Blanket, ca. 1935
Oil on canvas, 36 x 30 in.
Private collection



21
Red Cliffs, ca. 1939
Oil on canvas, 26 x 32 in.
Private collection



22
Before the Rain, 1945
Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in.
Private collection

CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ*

PAINTINGS

Landscape, 1904
Unknown

Portrait, 1907
Unknown

Girl with a Fan, before 1907
Unknown

Portrait of an Actress, before 1908
Unknown

Invernizzi, also exhibited as *Prosper Invernizzi, Esq.*, before 1910
Unknown

Young Woman in Blue and Gold, also exhibited as *Portrait*, before 1910
82 x 40 in.
Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia

Portrait of a Young Woman, also exhibited as *Girl in Black*, and *Young Woman in Black*, 1910
74 x 35¾ in.
Elvehjem Museum of Art

Portrait of a Young Girl, 1910
82 x 49¾ in.
National Arts Club Permanent Collection, New York, N.Y.

A Young Woman, also known as *Young Woman in White*, and *Girl in White*, 1910
74 x 36 in.

Girl in Gold, also exhibited as *Young Girl in Gold*, 1910
74 x 36 in.

Clouds after Rain, before 1911
Unknown

A Portrait of a Man, before 1911
Unknown

A Woman of the East, before 1911
Unknown

An Old Man, before 1911
Unknown

Late Afternoon, before 1911
Unknown

Study in Brown, also exhibited as *Hilda Ward*, 1911
82 x 40 in.

A Rainy Day, 1911
Unknown

Island Pines, ca. 1911
24 x 30 in.

Stone Walls, ca. 1911
24 x 30 in.

On the Shore, ca. 1911
24 x 30 in.

Rising Mist, ca. 1911
24 x 30 in.

A Study, also exhibited as *A Study (Land and Sea)* and *Land and Sea*, 1912
24 x 30 in.

Battle with the Winds, also known as *Hurricane*, ca. 1916

The Headland, 1916
30 x 36 in.

Sea and Headland (# 1), 1916
30 x 36 in.
Art Students League of New York

The Fog [The Red Fog?], 1916
Unknown

Portrait of Morris Kantor, ca. 1917
24 x 20 in.
Milwaukee Art Museum

Granny, ca. 1917
24 x 30 in.

Summer Seas, ca. 1917
Unknown

Sea and Hills, ca. 1917
Unknown

Dawn, ca. 1919
Unknown

The Garden Between Dawn and Sunrise, also exhibited as *Between Dawn and Sunrise*, ca. 1919
73½ x 54 in.
Madison Art Center, Madison, Wisc.

Sea and Headland (#2), 1919
24 x 30 in.

Marine, ca. 1919
Unknown

Landscape, ca. 1919
Unknown

American Landscape, ca. 1920
30 x 36 in.

The Sea, later exhibited as *Marine*, ca. 1920
30 x 36 in.

Rock at Monhegan, ca. 1920
24 x 30 in.

Northeast Storm, ca. 1920
30 x 36 in.

Fishing Boats, ca. 1920
30 x 36 in.

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* *Height is given first*
Works known only from exhibition lists often lack dimensions
Unless otherwise noted, the work is in a private collection

Breaking Wave, ca. 1920
30 x 36 in.

Beach at Monhegan, ca. 1920
Unknown

Red Sail, ca. 1920
30 x 40 in.

Shore at Monhegan Island, ca. 1920
30 x 36 in.

The Rock, ca. 1920
24 x 30 in.

Under the Headland, ca. 1920
20 x 24 in.

Secret Cove, ca. 1920
20 x 24 in.

Nordic Spring, ca. 1920
[Portrait of Helen Hodgskin]
35¼ x 30⅜ in.

Girl in Yellow, ca. 1920s
74 x 36 in.

Blue Mood, ca. 1920s
30 x 24 in.

Nude, ca. 1920s
36 x 30 in.

Portrait—Miss M., ca. 1922
Unknown

An Island Gateway, ca. 1922
Unknown

Genesis, ca. 1924
74 x 54 in.
Madison Art Center, Madison, Wisc.

Portrait with Red Chair, ca. 1925
30 x 24 in.
Hunter Museum of Art, Chattanooga, Tenn.

Two Habitations, ca. 1925
Unknown

Desert Temples, also exhibited as *Temples of the Desert*, ca. 1925
30 x 36 in.

Desert and Mountains, ca. 1925
22 x 26 in.
National Arts Club Permanent Collection, New York, N.Y.

Golden Reverie, ca. 1925
32 x 26 in.
On loan to Elvehjem Museum of Art

Portrait of Mary, ca. 1925
36 x 30 in.
Elvehjem Museum of Art

Portrait of Henry J. Glintenkamp, ca. 1925
24 x 20 in.

Wagon Train, ca. 1925
30 x 36 in.

Indian Riders, ca. 1926
26 x 40 in.

Empty Houses near San Gabriel, ca. 1926
20 x 24 in.
Espanola High School, Espanola, N.M.

New Mexican Adobe, ca. 1926
24 x 30 in.

Morris Kantor, 1927
26 x 22 in.
Art Students League, New York, N.Y.

[Portrait of] Bernard Klonis, ca. 1929
26 x 22 in.

Cedar Bush Hills, ca. 1929
20 x 24 in.

Clay Hills, ca. 1929
24 x 30 in.

San Juan Indian, ca. 1929
32 x 26 in.

Young Woman in Pink Shawl, 1929
32 x 26 in.

Mi Casa, ca. 1930
26 x 32 in.

Road to Truchas, ca. 1930
20 x 25 in.

Pueblo Council Member, 1930
32 x 26 in.

Niña, 1930
32 x 26 in.

Foh-sawi, also exhibited as *Foh-sawi (Snowflake)*, ca. 1930
26 x 22 in.

Solitude, 1931
30 x 36 in.

Winding Road, also exhibited as *Arroyo de la Morada*, 1931
26 x 32 in.

Tahm-pi-oh, also exhibited as *Tahm-pi-oh (Sun Rays)*, *Tampian*, and *Tampioh*, 1931
32 x 26 in.

Pueblo Indian, ca. 1931
32 x 26 in.
Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of New Mexico

September Snow, ca. 1931
Unknown

Sangre de Cristo, ca. 1931
26 x 32 in.

Desert Castles, ca. 1931
26 x 32 in.

Casa Pequena, ca. 1931
Unknown

The Black Mesa, ca. 1931
22 x 26 in.
Unknown

Sunlight and Shadow, ca. 1931
22 x 26 in.
Unknown

Carlotta's House, ca. 1931
22 x 26 in.

Koh-tseh, also exhibited as *Koh-tseh (Yellow Buffalo)*, and *Kotseh*, ca. 1931
32 x 26 in.

Sierra Alta, ca. 1932
26 x 32 in.

Truchas, also exhibited as *Snow on Truchas*, ca. 1932
26 x 32 in.

Rain, ca. 1932
30 x 36 in.

Morada of the Hilltop, ca. 1932
22 x 26 in.

Tehua Maiden, ca. 1932
32 x 26 in.
Unknown

Among the Hills, ca. 1932
20 x 25 in.
Unknown

Dos Morados, ca. 1932
24 x 30 in.

Poco Tiempo, ca. 1932
26 x 32 in.

San Gabriel, ca. 1933
26 x 32 in.

In the Pasture, ca. 1933
26 x 32 in.

Nature's Architecture, ca. 1933
20 x 25 in.

Landscape—New Mexico, ca. 1933
28 x 34 in.

Snow, 1933
30 x 36 in.

Above the Ditch, ca. 1934
22 x 26 in.

Antonio Montoya, 1934
32 x 26 in.

Desert Harmony, 1934
24 x 30 in.

An American Gentleman, 1935
44 x 36 in.

Desert Grandeur, 1935
26 x 32 in.

Landscape with House, 1935
26 x 32
American Gallery of Western Art, Los Angeles

Near Los Alamos, 1935
22 x 26 in.

D. Paul Jones, 1935
31⅞ x 25¾ in.
Elvehjem Museum of Art

Nude with Navajo Blanket, ca. 1935
36 x 30 in.

Las Truchas in White, ca. 1936
22 x 26 in.

Desert in Summer, ca. 1937
26 x 32 in.

Mountains and Desert, ca. 1937
22 x 26 in.

Summer Clouds over Desert, ca. 1937
20 x 25 in.

Desert Sculptures, ca. 1937
26 x 32 in.

Clouds after Rain, 1938
26 x 32 in.

Red Cliffs, ca. 1939
26 x 32 in.

Las Sierras Altas, ca. 1939
22 x 26 in.

Desert Towers, ca. 1940
22 x 26 in.

Don Ambrosio, 1940
32 x 26 in.

Winter Pasture, also known as *Pasture with Snow*, 1940
22 x 26 in.

Morro in the Lane, ca. 1941
26 x 32 in.

Autumn, ca. 1941
26 x 32 in.

Governor Cruz and Dancers, 1944
44 x 36 in.

Before the Rain, 1945
24 x 30 in.

Powi-tseh, also known as *Powi-tse*, 1945
32 x 26 in.
The Heard Museum, Phoenix, Ariz.

Indian Woman and Child, 1946
32 x 26 in.

Antonio's House, 1925–1946
26 x 32 in.
First National Bank of Rio Arriba, N.M.

Desert Pyramids, 1925–1946
22 x 26 in.

Landscape with Moon, 1925–1946
26 x 32 in.

Near Chimayo, 1925–1946
20 x 25 in.

Red Clay Formation, 1925–1946
26 x 32 in.

Sentinels of the Hilltop, 1925–1946
22 x 26 in.

WATERCOLORS

Barn near the Sea, ca. 1920
9½ x 13½ in.

Cliffs, ca. 1920
10 x 14 in.

Headland and Sea, also known as *Monhegan*, ca. 1920
10 x 14½ in.

Land and Sea, ca. 1920
Unknown

Landscape, ca. 1920
11 x 14¼ in.

Landscape, ca. 1920
10 x 14½ in.

Landscape, also known as *Reflections*, ca. 1920
10¾ x 14½ in.

Landscape, ca. 1920
9¾ x 13 in.

Landscape, ca. 1920
10½ x 14 in.

Trees, ca. 1920
10 x 14 in.

Temple of the Sea, ca. 1920
Unknown

Waterfall, ca. 1920
Unknown

Fishing Boats, ca. 1920
10 x 14 in.

The Launch, ca. 1920
Unknown

The Landing, ca. 1920
Unknown

Boathouse, ca. 1920
Unknown

Deserted Village, ca. 1925
Unknown

Landscape [#1], ca. 1928
Unknown

Landscape [#2], ca. 1928
Unknown

Mountains, ca. 1928
Unknown

Hills and Mountains, ca. 1930
11 x 14½ in.

Landscape, ca. 1930
Unknown

Desert Hills, ca. 1930
Unknown

Deserted House, ca. 1930
10 x 14 in.

Desert, ca. 1930
Unknown

WOODCUTS

The Clamdigger, ca. 1910–1920
5⅛ x 7⅛ in.

Fishing Boats, ca. 1910–1920
5⅛ x 7⅛ in.

The Dawn, ca. 1919
4½ x 6⅝ in.

Repose, ca. 1919
4½ x 6½ in.

Sleep, ca. 1919
5⅛ x 7⅛ in.

The Desert, ca. 1925–1929
5⅛ x 7⅛ in.

Horses, also exhibited as
Los Caballos, ca. 1925–1930
7¾ x 9½ in.

Penitente Land, ca. 1925–1930
5⅛ x 7⅛ in.

Los Indios, ca. 1925–1932
5⅛ x 7⅛ in.

Rider near Morada, ca. 1925–1932
4¾ x 3⅝ in.

Adobe, ca. 1925–1932
5⅛ x 7⅛ in.

Mountains, ca. 1925–1932
4½ x 6½ in.

Greeting, ca. 1925–1932
5½ x 4 in.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1907 *Spring Exhibition*, National Academy of Design, New York, N.Y. *Girl with a Fan*

Apr. 1907 New York School of Art

Jan. 1908 *Special Exhibition of Contemporary Art*, National Arts Club, New York, N.Y., *Girl with a Fan*

Jan. 1908 *103rd Annual Exhibition*, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, *Portrait of an Actress*

Spring 1908 Special exhibition of works by Henri and associates, National Academy of Design, New York, N.Y.

Dec. 12, 1908–Jan. 1909 *Winter Exhibition*, National Academy of Design, New York, N.Y., *Portrait of an Actress*

1910 *105th Annual Exhibition*, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, *Young Woman in Blue and Gold*

Apr. 1910 *Exhibition of Independent Artists*, New York, N.Y., *Invernizzi*, *Young Woman in Blue and Gold*, *Portrait of a Young Woman*

Jan. 1911 National Arts Club of New York, New York, N.Y., *Young Woman in Blue and Gold*, *Portrait of a Young Girl*, *Girl in Black*

Feb. 1911 Circuit Exhibition of Contemporary Art of the National Arts Club of New York, Detroit, Mich.; Worcester, Mass.; Providence, R.I. *Young Woman in Blue and Gold*, *Portrait of a Young Girl*, *Girl in Black*

Mar.–Apr. 1911 *An Independent Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings of Twelve Men*, Beaux Arts Gallery, New York, N.Y., *A Woman of the East*, *A Young Woman*, *An Old Man*, *Late Afternoon*, *Clouds after Rain*, *A Portrait of a Man*, and *Prosper Invernizzi, Esq.*

1911? Annual Exhibition, National Arts Club, New York, N.Y.[1]

1911? National Arts Club, New York, N.Y.[2]

Jan. 17–Feb. 6, 1912 Seventh MacDowell Club Group Display, MacDowell Club, New York, N.Y., several landscapes and portraits including *Study in Brown* and *A Rainy Day*

Feb. 4–Mar. 24, 1912 *107th Annual Exhibition*, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, *Portrait of a Young Girl*

Jan. 8–Feb. 9, 1913 *Special Exhibition of the Work of Members*, National Arts Club, New York, N.Y., *A Study*

Feb. 17–Mar. 15, 1913 *International Exhibition of Modern Art*, Armory of the Sixty-ninth Infantry, New York, N.Y., *A Study*, *Portrait*

Apr. 1913 Fifteenth MacDowell Club Group Display, MacDowell Club, New York, N.Y.[3]

Feb. 1914 National Arts Club, New York, N.Y.: [4]

May 1916 One-man Show, Thumb Box Gallery, New York, N.Y.

Apr. 1917 Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists, New York, N.Y., *The Fog*

1918 Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists, New York, N.Y., *Summer Seas, Sea and Hills*

1919 Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists, New York, N.Y., *Dawn, Sea and Headland*

1920 Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists, New York, N.Y., *Marine, Landscape*

1921 Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists, New York, N.Y., *The Sea*, *The Headland*

Apr. 10–May 15, 1921 *Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings Showing the Later Tendencies in Art*, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, *The Red Fog*, *The Dawn*

1922 Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists, New York, N.Y., *The Garden Between Dawn and Sunrise*

1923 Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists, New York, N.Y., *Portrait—Miss M.*, *An Island Gateway*

1924 Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists, New York, N.Y., painting

Mid 1920s Exhibition of paintings by Homer Boss and Paula Becker-Modersohn (1878–1907), Böttcher-Gasse, Bremen, Germany, *Sea and Headland*, *The Rock at Monhegan*, *The Sea*, *Northeast Storm*, *Fishing Boats*, *American Landscape*, another landscape, *Nude*, *Portrait with Red Chair*, *Nordic Spring*

Mid 1920s Traveling Exhibition of the paintings exhibited in Bremen, to Hamburg, Berlin, and possibly other German cities

Apr. 14–May 10, 1925 *Exhibition of Water Color Paintings, Pastels, and Drawings by American and European Artists*, The Brooklyn Museum, New York, N.Y., *Cliffs, Headland and Sea*, *Landscape, Land and Sea*, *Temple of the Sea*, *Waterfall*

Oct. 20–31, 1925 The Salons of America, Inc., Anderson Galleries, New York, N.Y., *Two Habitations*, *Desert Temples, Desert and Mountains*, *Temple of the Sea*, Painting

1928 Watercolors by Five American Artists, Weyhe Gallery, New York, N.Y.

Jan. 1929 *Water Color Paintings, Pastels, and Drawings by American and European Artists and Miniatures by the Brooklyn Society of Miniature Painters*, The Brooklyn Museum, New York, N.Y., *Landscape, Landscape, The Launch, Mountains, Deserted Village, Fishing Boats*

Apr. 25–May 5, 1929 *Exhibition of Paintings and Graphics by Current League Students and Instructors at the Art Students League*, Art Students League, New York, N.Y., *Portrait*

May 1–Oct. 1, 1929 *Summer Exhibition by the Painter Life Members*, National Arts Club, New York, N.Y., *Desert and Mountains*

Mar. 1929–Feb. 1930 *Fifty Prints of the Year*, The American Institute of Graphic Arts, New York, N.Y. and traveling exhibition to sixty American cities, *The Desert* (woodcut)

Dec. 2–21, 1929 *Christmas Selling Show*, GRD Studio, New York, N.Y., *Desert, Dawn* (woodcuts) (charitable)

Dec. 1–20, 1930 *Christmas Selling Show*, GRD Studio, New York, N.Y., *Penitente Land, Horses* (woodcuts) (charitable)

Apr. 20–May 9, 1931 The Salons of America, Inc., Anderson Galleries, New York, N.Y., *Hills and Mountains*

Oct. 19–Nov. 7, 1931 *The United States in Pictures* (100 contemporary prints from all parts of the country), Weyhe Gallery, New York, N.Y., [Boss was one of the Southwest representatives.]

Feb. 27–Mar 26, 1932 *Contemporary American Artists* (first group exhibition), Midtown Galleries Cooperative Exhibitions, New York, N.Y., *Solitude*

Apr. 2–30, 1932 *Contemporary American Artists*, (second group exhibition), Midtown Galleries Cooperative Exhibitions, New York, N.Y., *Winding Road*

Apr. 18–30, 1932 *Exhibition of Paintings and Watercolors by Homer Boss*, Midtown Galleries Cooperative Exhibitions, New York, N.Y., *Temples of the Desert, Tahm-pi-oh (Sun Rays), Foh-sawi (Snowflake), Pueblo Indian, September Snow, Sangre de Cristo, Desert Castles, Casa Pequena, The Black Mesa, Sunlight and Shadow, Road to Truchas, Carlotta's House, Nude, Sea and Headland, Koh-tseh (Yellow Buffalo).* Watercolors: *Deserted Village, Hills and Mountains, The Landing, Landscape*

May 3–Jun. 2, 1932 *Contemporary American Artists* (third group exhibition), Midtown Galleries Cooperative Exhibitions, New York, N.Y.

Jun.–Jul. 1932 Outstanding paintings from the past season at Midtown Galleries, Casa Del Mar Club, Atlantic Beach, Long Island, N.Y., the New Mexican works including *Tahm-pi-oh*

Jun. 1932 Midtown Galleries Cooperative Exhibitions, New York, N.Y., *Desert Hills*

Jun. 20–Jul. 1, 1932 Woodcuts and Lithographs by Members, Midtown Galleries Cooperative Exhibitions, New York, N.Y., *Los Caballos* and three other woodcuts

1932 *Exhibition of Work by the Staff*, Art Students League, New York, N.Y., *Winding Road, The Castles*

Jan. 29–Mar. 18, 1933 *128th Annual Exhibition*, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, *Sangre de Cristo*

Feb. 15–Mar. 4, 1933 *Homer Boss*, Midtown Galleries Cooperative Exhibitions, New York, N.Y., *Sierra Alta, Truchas, Niña, Rain, Morada of the Hilltop, Tehua Maiden, Among the Hills, Dos Moradas, Poco Tiempo, Land and Sea, Under the Headland, The Rock*

Spring 1933 National Academy of Design, New York, N.Y., *Niña*

Sep. 1933 Pre-Season September Group Exhibition, Midtown Galleries Cooperative Exhibitions, New York, N.Y., *Road to Truchas*

Sep. 1–30, 1936 *23rd Annual Exhibition of Painters and Sculptors of the Southwest*, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, *Solitude*

Aug. 1937 Exhibition of oils and watercolors by Homer Boss and tempera paintings and prints by William C. Palmer, Art Students League, New York, N.Y.

Sep. 1937 Annual Exhibition of Members and Associates, Art Students League, New York, N.Y., *Landscape—New Mexico*

May 1940 *Coronado Country Exhibition* (in honor of the Coronado Cuarto Centennial), Albuquerque, traveling to Tulsa Museum, Oklahoma City Art Center, University of Oklahoma, and Topeka Art Center (sponsored by the institutions and the New Mexico Art Program of the Work Projects Administration), *Tahm-pi-oh*

1941 Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists, New York, N.Y., *Portrait*

Mar. 1942 Paintings by Santa Fe Artists, La Quinta Gallery Invitational, Albuquerque, *Desert Castles*

Sep. 1–30, 1942 *29th Annual Exhibition of Painters and Sculptors of the Southwest*, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, *American Gentleman*

Aug. 1–Sep. 15, 1943 *30th Annual Exhibition of Painters and Sculptors of the Southwest*, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, *Portrait*

Aug. 1–Sep. 3, 1945 *32nd Annual Exhibition of Painters and Sculptors of the Southwest*, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, *D. Paul Jones*

1949–1950 Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, traveling to Los Alamos, Alamagordo, Moru, Tucumcari, Clovis, Portales, Las Vegas, and Artesia, *Arroyo de la Morada*

Oct. 1956 Homer Boss Memorial Exhibition (works from 1910–1946), Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, *Young Woman in Black, Young Woman in Blue and Gold, Girl in Gold, Hilda Ward, The Headland*, American Landscape, Rock at Monhegan, Red Sail*, Breaking Wave, Marine*, Portrait*, Nude, Temples of the Desert, Morris Kantor*, Young Woman in Pink Shawl*, Niña*, Pueblo Council Member, Road to Truchas*, Tampioh, Tehua Maiden*, Snow, Above the Ditch*, Desert Harmony, Antonio Montoya, D. Paul Jones, An American Gentleman, Solitude*, Landscape with House*, Desert Grandeur, Landscape near Los Alamos, Rain, Arroyo de*

la Morada, Clouds after Rain, Don Ambrosio, Pasture with Snow*, Governor Cruz and Dancers, Before Rain, Powi-tse*, Indian Woman and Child*

Nov. 1956 Traveling Memorial Exhibition of the preceding * works, to several cities in New Mexico

Jan. 9–Feb. 21, 1960 *Fiftieth Anniversary of the Exhibition of Independent Artists in 1910*, Delaware Art Center, Wilmington, *Young Woman in Blue and Gold, Portrait of a Young Woman*

March 1960 *Fiftieth Anniversary of the Exhibition of Independent Artists in 1910*, James Graham and Sons Gallery, New York, N.Y., *Young Woman in Blue and Gold, Portrait of a Young Woman*

Feb. 1963 *The Armory Show, Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition 1913–1963*, Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica, N.Y. and the Armory of the Sixty-ninth Infantry, New York, N.Y., *A Study, Portrait*

Mar. 1966 *The Artist's Record*, Museum of New Mexico, Albuquerque, *Temples of the Desert, Tampian*

Feb. 8–Mar. 8, 1970 *Masterpieces from the Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe*, The Marion Koogler McNay Art Institute, San Antonio, Tex., *Pueblo Indian*

May 1977 *Homer Boss*, Southeast Arkansas Arts and Science Center, Pine Bluff, Ark., *Tampioh, Hilda Ward, Young Woman in Blue and Gold, H. Glintenkamp, Blue Mood, Portrait with Red Chair, Rock at Monhegan, Island Pines, Clay Hills, Snow, Sierra Alta, Desert Grandeur, Desert Castles, Morro in the Lane, Mi Casa, Las Truchas in White, Near Los Alamos, Morada of the Hilltop, Mountains and Desert, Nature's Architecture, Rising Mist*

Jun.10–Jul.1, 1978 *Homer Boss, American Painter 1882–1956*, Theodore Lyman Wright Art Center, Beloit College, Beloit, Wisc., *Girl in White, A Study (Land and Sea), Between Dawn and Sunrise, Genesis, Stone Walls, On the Shore, Fishing Boats, Breaking Wave, Portrait of Morris Kantor, Portrait of Mary, Golden Reverie, Road to Truchas, Sangre de Cristo, Foh-sawi (Snowflake), Snow on Truchas, Rain, New Mexican Adobe, Portrait of D. Paul Jones, Nude with Navajo Blanket, Arroyo de la Morada, Clouds after Rain, Desert Sculptures, Cedar Bush Hills, San Juan Indian, Desert Towers, Before the Rain, Red Cliffs*. Watercolors: *Landscape, Monhegan, Reflections*

Aug. 4–Oct. 15, 1978, *Homer Boss, American Painter 1882–1956*, Madison Art Center, Madison, Wisc., paintings and watercolors as in the preceding list

Jan. 21–Mar. 11, 1979 *Tucson Collects: The West*, Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson, *Indian Woman and Child*

Jan. 9–29, 1983 *The Immortal Eight and Its Influence*, Art Students League, New York, NY, *Sea and Headland*

Jun. 12–Aug.15, 1983 *Works by Homer Boss*, Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin–Madison, *Girl in White, A Study (Land and Sea), Breaking Wave, Portrait of Morris Kantor, Foh-sawi (Snowflake), Nude with Navajo Blanket, Portrait of D. Paul Jones, Rain, Clouds after Rain*. Watercolor: *Monhegan*. Woodcuts: *Repose, Sleep, The Dawn, The Clamdigger, Los Indios*

Apr. 1985 *Woman*, Terra Museum of American Art, Evanston, Ill., *Young Woman in Black*

Oct. 24–Nov. 30, 1985 *Chase and Henri: Between Two American Masters*, Grand Central Art Galleries, Inc., New York, N.Y., *Girl in White, Girl in Gold, Morris Kantor, Golden Reverie, Nude with Navajo Blanket, San Juan Indian, Foh-sawi (Snowflake), Young Woman in Blue and Gold*

May–Aug. 1993 *Recent Acquisitions*, Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Wisc., *Portrait of Morris Kantor*

Endnotes

1. "National Arts Club's Own Painters," *The Evening Mail*, n.d., "dashing portrait sketch of a somewhat angular lady—a symphony in somewhat violent but harmonious color. This accomplishes. A strong blue background is flanked above and below by strips of yellow. This is an extremely decorative and brilliant picture." Found chronologically in Homer Boss's scrapbook
2. "Prize Show at Arts Club," n.n., n.d., "two fine portraits" found chronologically in Homer Boss's scrapbook
3. "In the Galleries," *International Studio* 49, June 1913, 85, "a marine by Homer Boss and a bold character study entitled *Paddy Leary* demanded applause."
4. "In the Galleries," *International Studio* 51, February 1914, 202, "a large and quaint portrait reminiscent of Matisse"

Public Collections

American Gallery of Western Art, Los Angeles, California
Art Students League, New York, New York
Blandford Historical Society, Blandford, Massachusetts
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Madison, Wisconsin
Espanola High School, Espanola, New Mexico
First National Bank of Rio Arriba, New Mexico
Georgia Museum of Art, The University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia
The Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona
Hunter Museum of Art, Chattanooga, Tennessee
Madison Art Center, Madison, Wisconsin
Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Museum of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
National Arts Club, New York, New York

APPENDICES
A: Homer Boss

By Walter Pach (Excerpt from *Shadowland, Classic and Motion Picture Magazine*, 1922)

. . . The painting of Homer Boss has been shown with some regularity at the larger exhibitions in New York and other cities for fifteen years or more, and yet it is safe to say that his name is not over-familiar to even the constant visitors to our galleries, who would be surprised if told they had looked at these pictures ten, twenty or thirty times—and not seen them. But there is more to say of the artist: the last man in the world who would wish to be looked on as the founder of a school of Art, and not be placed on that uncomfortable eminence by friendly or hostile critics—he is nevertheless entitled to the credit of having conducted a sort of laboratory of Art where serious students, working under his guidance, did some of the best work we have seen from the younger Americans. They are today among the most hopeful figures in our exhibitions—Carl Kahler, Charles Duncan, Morris Kantor, James Butler—to name but a few of those who worked in the big studio where Mr. Boss taught, and one reason for this strength is the self-reliance that he encouraged in them. There is none of the hall-mark that the school so often imprints on men who have studied together, and from this fact we may proceed to its source in the character of Mr. Boss himself, as well as in that of the men he has influenced. One sees him as a man unflinchingly determined to get at the truth of Art for himself, without regard to the fashion of the hour. Here, too, is a reason for the unfamiliarity of part of our public with his work. If an artist is willing to float with the stream, it will carry him along quite nicely; if he wants to strike out on a new course, to express the ideas that are his own and no other man's he must expect that it will take a certain time for the public to follow him.

A man of few words, even when amongst people he knows well, Mr. Boss makes his statement in the painting tersely and without pretension. If you have caught what he has to say, you will not readily forget it; but he will not repeat, and if you are open to the solicitations of the noisier people round about, you pass on with only a troubled memory of the words you did not quite understand. Why shouldn't he repeat, you ask. Perhaps it isn't the most gracious reply to make—but he has other things to do. He is working, thinking. He knows that we are facing big problems today, he is intent on working out the phases of them that fall within his strong vision—he has never been able to interest himself in compelling the public to recognize his achievement.

A little more emphasis here and there, a discreet visit at one house or another, a few amiable compliments to this student or artist who has such influential connections—how easy these things are for the arriviste, the climber; but they are an intolerable bore for the man who has real work to do, the words stick in his throat. And so there is a difference of character if not of "school," which divides artists as sharply as that matter of talent. When a man works to satisfy himself he produces things that are in a different category from those that are made to please the public, and to sell.

And the man who really sets out to satisfy himself finds that he is working toward a horizon that recedes exactly as fast as it advances. One always thinks of old Hokusai in this connection. "If I only had thirty more years to live" (he was then eighty-nine), "if I could live twenty years more, even ten—." The great realization is always ahead, but when we come to know these men, they are the ones we care for permanently; for we are all believers in the things ahead of us, and so the pictures done by men who have insisted on progressing are a source of strength to us, while the things so neatly aimed at the spot where we happened to stand at a given moment become a dead weight that we are glad to leave behind.

Here then is a brief record of the work of one man who has refused to stand still. First there came a period of conventional schooling during which his native Yankee handiness was developed to the point where he was quite sufficiently able to "draw what he saw." It is a proficiency shared by the thousands who have been trained for it; what makes the individual we call the artist is the faculty for seeing what those thousands overlook. And it was this idea that Homer Boss had impressed on him when he came under the instruction of Robert Henri. The principle of this teacher was that the hand would follow if the mind would lead; and his appeal was for deeper interest in life, as exemplified by the model, by nature, and by the work of the masters. He would bring the photographs of their paintings to show his students, and scarcely an evening of criticism was complete without some discussion of a picture by Velasquez or Titian or Rembrandt—or was it a Manet or a Degas? . . .

Of particular importance to Homer Boss were the visits of Thomas Anshutz, who came over from Philadelphia to give those unforgettable demonstrations of anatomy. . . . Before an audience able to apply his lesson to their daily work, Mr. Anshutz would begin with a skeleton and build up the muscles of the body on it with clay, constantly referring to a model who stood beside the growing figure on the stand, and whose movements, dictated by the artist, showed the function of each muscle on the bones. To perform this feat, something is needed beside anatomical knowledge and manual skill; a sense of function, a quality of imagination also is required. Possessing these latter faculties, Boss set himself to master the secret of the human mechanism and today, as in the time when he taught, he is one of the few men we possess who can rehearse the drama of our muscular structure in the manner

that Thomas Anshutz presented it to his students.

The years passed; the young painter had come before the public, careful observers had noted the seriousness of his effort. He had his first successes with the public, and continued the hard effort for a living that is the part of every artist who is not blessed with independent means, or hampered by the ability to please, which makes for an easy selling. Does "hampered" seem a strange word to use? It is exact; for there is a period between the school years and the maturity of an artist when he must search about him and within him for the precise words that he is to speak. It is a dangerous time, for a too-ready acceptance by the public means the arresting of the necessary research before the point is reached where the art goes on from its own impetus, unaffected by outer circumstances.

In the last decade, outer circumstance has played a very big part in the artist's life. The results of the great modern efforts of Europe were brought to America, and every man young enough and honest enough to make changes in his work has had to face the necessity for re-valuation of his ideas, he has had to ask himself whether he was going in the right direction, whether he must not modify his course by a point or two of the compass or by a complete about-face as the case might be.

The self-reliance we have noted in the character of Homer Boss was not of that narrow type which prevents an artist from accepting the criticism contained in another man's work. It was not necessary for him to throw away the qualities he had worked so long to achieve; he found that his problem was rather one of widening the application of the ideas that had always absorbed him most. Just as the body has its mechanism in which each member, each muscle, is functional, so in nature there is a structure which we must account for in painting if we are to satisfy the mind as to the truth of our expression. The artist who merely copies the outlines and lights and shadows of his model cannot carry conviction to the spectator—there must be that process of working from the inside, there must be a sense of unity, and it is not too dearly bought if extreme emphasis on a particular feature is given in order to make clear the dominating character of the individual or the scene represented. It was this idea that the modern French schools developed in Boss's work; they showed, by the freedom with which they handled the appearances of nature, that the great tradition of European art is the creation of a structure parallel in its expression with that of the scene which inspired the artist. It is when he realizes that he is making a picture, a totally new thing and not a reproduction of an old one, that the artist arrives at beauty of line and color and thereby proves the genuineness of his vision, of his talent. The scene in nature is the same for all men, all recognize the various objects, their sizes, colors, position. If the artist does no more than repeat them on his canvas he may cause admiration for his skill—he has not told us the meaning one feels to exist in the scene, he has not added to our intellectual stature.

The pursuit of these meanings, of these sources of enthusiasm, has been the consistent occupation of the artist before us. He is giving us a deeper vision of nature and of ourselves. He is of that company on which America must depend for the art which shall record its character.

B: Students of Homer Boss

A. S. Baylinson (1882–1950)
Cecil C. Bell (1906–1970)
William Couzyn (Wessel Couzijn) (b. 1912)
Stuart Davis (1894–1964)
Robert Hale (1901–1985)
Malvina Hoffman (1887–1966)
Emil Holzhauer (1887–1986)
Morris Kantor (1896–1974)
W. Langdon Kihn (1898–1957)
Bernard Klonis (1906–1957)
Stewart Klonis (1901–1989)
Yasuo Kuniyoshi (1893–1953)
Anita Malfatti (1889–1964)
Reginald Marsh (1898–1954)
John C. McPherson (1885–1971)
Reuben Nakian (1897–1986?)

Lenders to the exhibition

Anonymous Private Collectors

Mr. and Mrs. H. Earl Hoover II

Hunter Museum of Art, Chattanooga, Tennessee

Madison Art Center, Madison, Wisconsin

Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, New Mexico

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