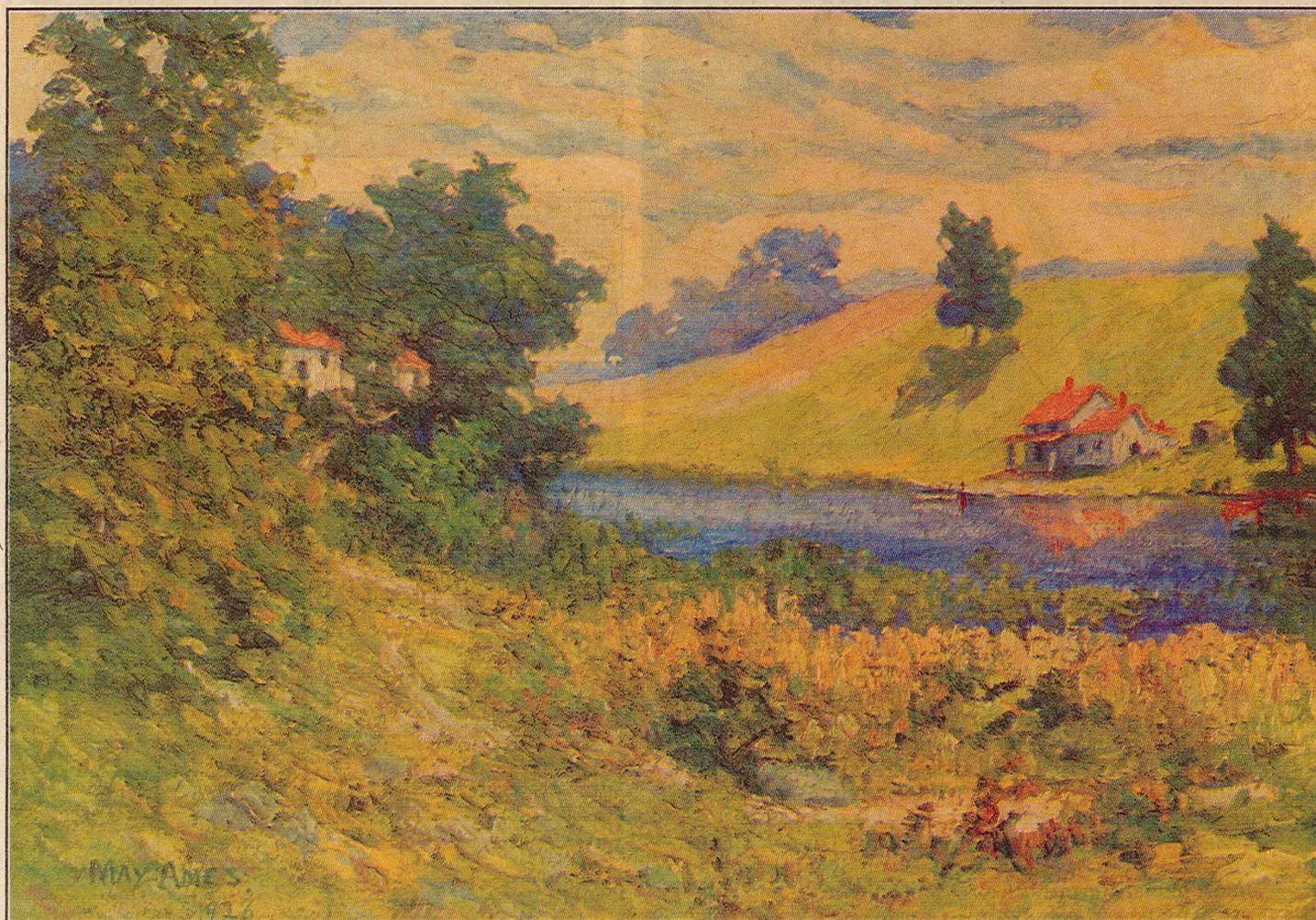


EXHIBIT | RIFFE GALLERY



Blue Mirror by May Ames

French twist

Midwesterners offer interpretations of impressionism

By Christopher A. Yates | FOR THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

IMPRESSIONISM

is the most popular and identifiable genre in the art world. ¶ The style captured the American imagination amid the political and economic ascent of the United States. Though modern, it encompassed the ideas of an American Eden as expressed by the Hudson River school. ¶ At the end of the 19th century, urbanization and industrialization signaled endless possibilities as well as the loss of a bucolic past. Impressionism offered a way to straddle the divide.

Rediscovery is the key to "Midwestern Visions of Impressionism: 1890-1930," on view at the Riffe Gallery. The exhibit features works by 31 artists born or raised in the Midwest.

Curated by Christine Fowler Shearer, executive director of the Massillon Museum, the show focuses on artists based in Ohio and Illinois, and several associated with the Brown County Art Colony in south-central Indiana. Most trained in Europe or were taught by notables such as William Merritt Chase, Frank Duveneck and John Twachtman.

The work is strong. Layered color and lush brushstrokes reveal artists deeply engaged in the type of searching required for truly visceral plein-air paintings.

In *Winona, the Pool* by William J. Forsyth of Indiana, energetic yellow-green and blue patches of color swirl in trees above figures near a pond.

Cleveland artist May Ames' *Blue Mirror* relies on rhythmic brushstrokes to evoke sensations of wind and air.

Every piece offers a sophisticated display of light and atmosphere. In *Duneland*, Frank V. Dudley, who painted in Indiana, subtly shifts value and chroma to create a vast illusion of space.

Karl Kappes, born in Zanesville but based in Toledo, offers a dramatic play of light and shadow in *The Kappes Garden*, using shifts of warm and cool colors.



Jullien by Louis Ritman

Some pieces signal future directions in American art. Depictions of Indiana farm life in paintings such as *Sorghum Mill* by Marie Goth and *Evening Chores* by Carl Graf suggest the onset of the regionalist movement, which emerged in the 1930s.

Several figurative and portrait pieces are included. Some are scenes of daily life, while others are poetic studies of light.

Trained in Cleveland, Cincinnati and Munich, Germany, Otto Bacher displays a

controlled, if not academic, impressionistic technique in *Mary Holland Bacher*. Chicago artist Pauline Palmer's *The Morning Sun*, an intimate interior scene with a female figure in front of a window, is an elegant presentation of subtle, indirect light.

Less romantic but equally engaging is Louis Ritman's *Jullien*. The Russian-born painter was trained in Chicago and Paris and, like many others in the show, spent much time in Giverny, France, living and working in the shadow of Monet.

Though dominated by picturesque rural scenes, the exhibit includes depictions of urban life. Northeastern Ohio artist Abel Warshawsky, who lived in France for extended periods, captures the pace and activity of the city in *Dome et Rotonde*.

"Midwestern Visions" serves as a window on the periphery of art history. While the artists aren't as renowned as those of the European avant-garde, their paintings are truly accomplished and resolved.

BEST VISUAL-ARTS EVENTS

'Art on a String'

The Schumacher Gallery, Capital University: Fifty-three examples from China, Japan and South Korea showed the color, whimsy and, sometimes, serious purpose of kites.

— Jacqueline Hall

'Andy Warhol: Other Voices, Other Rooms'

Wexner Center for the Arts: The sheer volume of material on display — more than 700 objects — quickly overwhelms the viewer. Revealing consumer culture's complexity, superficiality and recklessness, Warhol exposes essential truths about our world. (The show continues through Feb. 15.)

— Christopher A. Yates

'The Best of 2008'

Ohio Craft Museum: The annual juried show assembled imaginative, humorous and superbly crafted works by 89 members of Ohio Designer Craftsmen.

— J.H.

'A Cultural Legacy: 200 Years of Ohio Art'

Keny Galleries: More than 100 paintings, photographs, pottery works and more revealed a remarkable range of styles in Ohio from the early 19th century to the present.

— J.H.

'Current Impressions: Prints by Contemporary Indian Printmakers'

Frank Museum of Art, Otterbein College: Eclectic prints displayed the daring new directions pursued by modern Indian artists.

— Kaizaad Kotwal

'Great Expectations: Aristocratic Children in European Portraiture'

Columbus Museum of Art: Portraits of royal children painted by famous artists from the early 16th to late 19th centuries were a treat.

— J.H.

'Karl Mullen'

Lindsay Gallery: Moody and magical, Mullen's abstract-expressionistic works are kaleidoscopic, painted reveries.

— K.K.

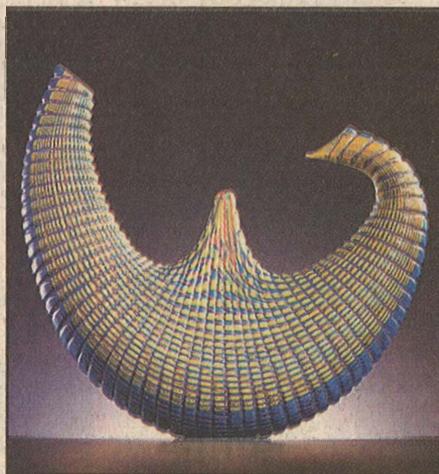
'Les Dames de Verre' ('Women of Glass')

Hawk Galleries: Cassandra Blackmore, Adrienne Evans, Robin Grebe and Mary Van Cline approach glass in different, often unconventional, ways. All of their works demonstrate the medium's expressive potential and versatility.

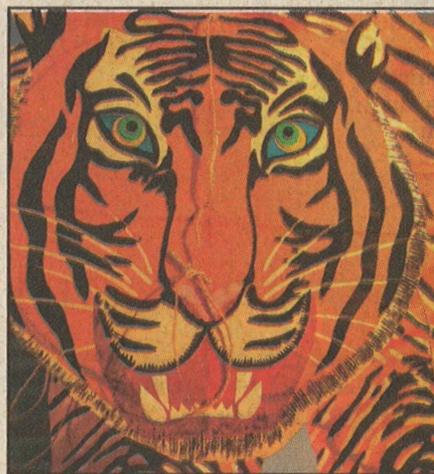
— J.H.



Transverse by Robin Grebe, at Hawk Galleries



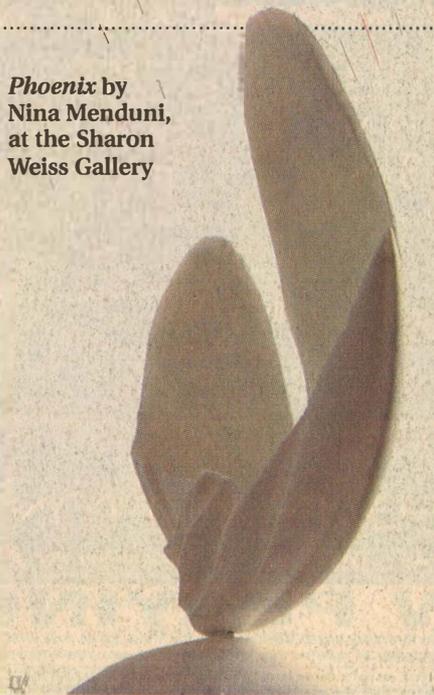
Batman by Lino Tagliapietra, at Hawk Galleries



Flying Tiger by Li Shang-pei, at Capital University



An untitled painting by Karl Mullen, at Lindsay Gallery



Phoenix by Nina Menduni, at the Sharon Weiss Gallery

'Lino Tagliapietra'

Hawk Galleries: Moving into his mid-70s, the glass-maker continues to create vessels and wall hangings that keep him at the top of the studio-glass world.

— Bill Mayr

'Midnight Robbers: The Artists of Notting Hill Carnival'

Ohio State University Urban Arts Space: The collection was a suitably festive inauguration of the new arts venue Downtown in the renovated Lazarus building.

— B.M.

'Midwestern Visions of Impressionism: 1890-1930'

Riffe Gallery: The rediscovery of impressionism was the key to this show of works by 31 American painters — exceptional artists but not that well-known — who were born or raised in the Midwest.

— C.Y.

'Nina Menduni: Pietrasanta'

Sharon Weiss Gallery: The abstract works in marble included sensual forms and sinewy shapes from nature.

— K.K.

'Paul Shambroom: Picturing Power'

Columbus Museum of Art: Working long periods on extended projects, the photographer revealed mundane activities that support or react to power.

— C.Y.

'Sid Chafetz: Profs, Pols, Poets, Et Al'

OSU Faculty Club: In his 80s, the master printmaker is an artistic and humanitarian force to be reckoned with. His recent multimedia works excoriate the Bush administration and the war in Iraq.

— K.K.

Midwestern Visions of Impressionism: 1890 - 1930

By Elizabeth Ann James

The Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery will continue to host "Midwestern Visions of Impressionism: 1890-1930," featuring the work of 31 artists born or raised in the Midwest, until October 12, 2008.

Impressionism has never grown old or passé. This exhibit allows viewers to appreciate the expert brushwork practiced by American artists who studied in Europe or were taught by European trained teachers and later broke away from a strictly realist tradition. Quite simply, this is a lovely show that contains much spectacular painting!

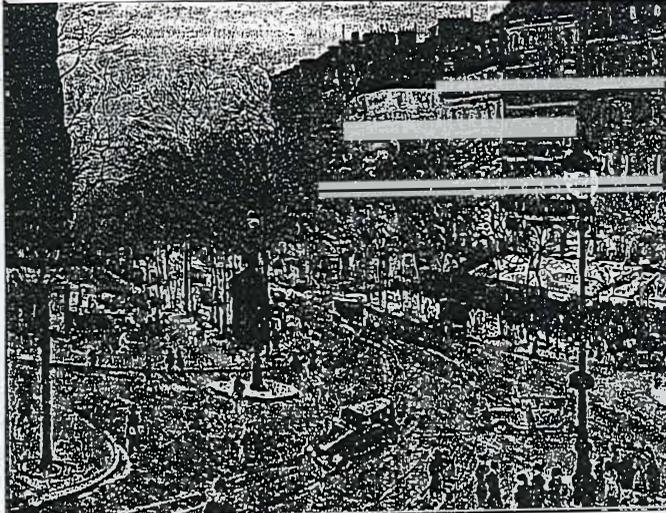
As did their European counterparts, the American Impressionists painted swiftly, often outdoors. In "Midwestern Visions" all of the paintings are oil. The sizes, in general, run from medium to large.

I was infatuated by the luminous painting techniques of such influential masters as William J. Forsyth (1854-1935). Forsyth was born in the tiny town of California, Ohio. Moving to Indianapolis while a youth, he studied at several regional schools and later went to Munich for advanced study. There he was accepted by the Royal Academy; he spent his summers painting in small towns in Germany. Eventually, he returned to Indiana where he had a long and distinguished teaching career. His Impressionistic influence was far reaching.

Forsyth's *Winona, The Pool*, in which huge dark willowy trees dominate, was painted around 1926. The tiny figures, children on the lawn in front of the unassuming white house, have "dressed up" for a pretend tea party. This painting, so dense and murky at first glance, lights up with miraculous reflections from the pool. The more one gazes, the more it shines. Columbus poet, David Francis Smith, inspired by this painting, has described it well: "The shade is dense/the pool is crystal clear/reflecting trees and leaves/and children standing near."

As I looked at canvases by such influential teachers as Forsyth, I appreciated the sophistication of their paintings. At the same time, I was also attracted by glimpses of an agrarian past. Although the age of industrialism had begun by 1900, by 1930 the majority of Americans still lived on farms or in small towns.

Before and after the First World War, American art students had traveled to Europe, mainly to Paris, where palettes were bright, and to Munich, where colors were sombre. Returning home, these artists began to teach art, to paint their own versions of Impressionism. The majority of the Riffe exhibit canvases were painted by artists who had returned to settle in rural Ohio, Illinois, or Indiana.



Dome Et Rotonde, Montparnasse, nd, oil on canvas 25 x 32, by Abel Warshawsky. Collection of Robert Burns.

Sorghum and Garden Flowers

Two of the Riffe exhibit paintings depict sorghum mills. The prolific L.O. Griffith (1875-1956), a wonderful landscapist, painted his big realistic *Sorghum Mill* sometime around 1920. In this painting you see only the back of a stocky, bald-yet-white-fringed guy who wears a white shirt and work trousers. He is running the sorghum mill, a rectangular piece of machinery as tall as he is. A broad white workhorse strains at a load. The sky is invisible, but it is drenching the hilly farmland with incandescent gold light. Near the machine, layers of sorghum stalks glimmer.

In 1930, Marie Goth painted another *Sorghum Mill*, from which steam (or sorghum) rises in a flurry. Two big white farmhorses strain at their load. A lanky guy, in overalls and cap, his back toward us, leans into the brew. So does a woman in a knee-length dress, her hair in a bandanna. It's the Great Depression. This painting might have emerged from the WPA program. It's interesting that both sorghum mill scenes were painted with a view seen across the operator's back.

Like their contemporaries, neither Griffith or Goth owned computers. They had to learn how to draw - horses, machinery, the human figure. They had to learn about making sorghum, and they did a good job of depicting the process.

The two artists could be lyrical, as in the case of Griffith's *Sunny Barn*, which is awash in hazy yellows and misty blues. Both artists were power painters. -Yes, their work is "illustrative," and by gosh, it's good!

In 1912, the artist and teacher Karl Kappes (1861-1943) moved from Zanesville, Ohio, to Toledo where he lived near the city until he died in 1943. His painting, *The Kappes Garden*, is one of the exhibit's most colorful and popular paintings. In Kappes garden the rows are

razor straight; we cannot tell whether Kappes has planted green beans or tomatoes, and it doesn't matter. To the right, among more straight rows, a minuscule woman in "old time" dress leans to cut long stemmed flowers - tea roses or geraniums, perhaps. Close up, bright dabs, probably trumpet flowers, twine around a fence. Behold: unidentifiable Impressionist flowers. Beyond the garden, the fields - flat, flat, flat in northwest Ohio - stretch into the distance. We note the pointed windbreak of trees, the ugly gray farmhouse, the garden rows. All is straight and narrow yet growing upward. Kappes' Impressionist technique allowed him to paint with accuracy while he employed swift expressive strokes.

Abel Warshawsky (1883-1962) loved to visit his hometown of Cleveland, yet he remained for years in France where he cut a vibrant and romantic figure. His big grayish *Dôme et Rotonde, Montparnasse*, is a wide, uncluttered Parisian cityscape

Continued on following page

ART • ANTIQUES • ACCESSORIES

Sharon Weir Gallery

Jumping Daisy bronze, by Renate Burgyan

Chasing Fireflies

Sculpture and Painting

By Renate Burgyan and Stacy Leeman

September 2008

Opening Reception Sun., September 7, 1-4pm

20 East Lincoln Street
614.291.5683 or 614.451.8165
TH 12 to 4pm, FSat 12-5pm, Sun 1-4pm
www.sharonweirgallery.com

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For more information, visit www.riffegallery.org or call 614/644-9624

Image: Otto Bacher (1856-1902), *Mary Holland Bacher*, 1891, oil on canvas, 25 1/2 x 22 1/4. The Cleveland Museum of Art. Gift of Will Low Bacher

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Riffe Gallery cont.

that seals forever 1918, at a moment when traffic is sparse and the day is dove gray. Warshawsky's large canvases reveal his own prowess, yet his sombre colors and his broad dramatic brushwork speak of his European influences.

In 1926, Ada Walter Shutz painted *Grandma Barnes Cabin*, which smoulders with a red bush in bloom, which includes a fringe of orange forest toward the horizon; and close up, includes a shabby log cabin with bright blue windows. Shutz's loving depiction of mother and child in *Wash Day* provides a "Madonna and Child" for all seasons, and you'll note she uses a Raphael-like blue. E K Williams' ethereal *Greasy Creek Road* blew me away, and you must see it for yourself!

"Midwestern Visions of Impressionism" includes superb full length "sitting room" portraits of women, among them Mary Holland Bacher as painted by her husband. I have written more about these and other paintings on my ArtScene blog at www.lizjamesartscene.blogspot.com. To paraphrase General MacArthur, "old Impressionists never die." Indeed, their best work does not fade away and they provide images for us to rejoice in!



Jullien, nd., oil on canvas, by Louis Rilman. The Butler Institute of American Art.

The Riffe Center Gallery, 77 S. High St., is open every day except Monday. Call 614-644-9624 for hours and information. Visit www.lizjamesartscene.blogspot.com

Riffe Gallery explores Midwest Impressionism in new exhibition



This is an 1891, oil on canvas painting by Otto Bacher (1856-1909) titled "Mary Holland Bacher," and in the Riffe Gallery exhibition in Columbus.

BY LACEY LUCE
Press Contributor

The Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery presents "Midwestern Visions of Impressionism: 1890-1930" through Oct. 12.

This exhibition takes a fresh look at the American

space is limited, and all children must be accompanied by a registered adult.

The Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery is located in the Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts, 77 S.

Impressionism movement through the paintings of 31 artists born or raised in the Midwest and working between 1890 and 1930. In addition to bringing attention to the often overlooked talent of Ohio, Illinois and Indiana, *Midwestern Visions of Impressionism*

High St., Columbus.

Summer hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday; 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Wednesday; 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday; 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday; noon to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. (Summer

explores where these artists fit within the larger context of American Impressionism and how their regions informed their painting.

"One way Americans became acquainted with Impressionism was through the many artists who studied abroad," said exhibition curator Christine Fowler Shearer.

"These artists, many of whom were from the Midwest, studied academic art in places such as Paris and Munich, while also being exposed to the nonacademic traditions in these cities. As their styles evolved, they incorporated this exposure into their artwork, resulting in a form of Impressionism that combined academic style with Impressionist color palettes and brush strokes.

"In America, Midwestern landscape painters were able to embrace their native settings through the Impressionistic technique," said Shearer, who is the executive director of the Massillon Museum.

The gallery will host a family workshop, from 2-4 p.m. Aug. 10 in the Capitol Theatre lobby on the third floor of the Riffe Center. Riffe Gallery staff will help students 6-17 learn a painting technique called pointillism, which uses tiny dots of color rather than broad brush strokes, to create an impressionist-style painting. Registration is required as

hours are Aug. 1 through Sept. 30.) The gallery is closed Monday and state holidays. Riffe Gallery events are free.

For more information, visit www.riffegallery.org or phone (614) 644-9624.

Midwest Impressionism in new exhibition

Impressionist color palettes and brush strokes.

"In America, Impressionism offered a counterpoint to the academic art traditions and the opportunity to establish a new artistic voice for Americans. Midwestern landscape painters were able to embrace their native settings through the Impressionistic technique," said Shearer, who is the executive director of the Massillon Museum.

Artists in the exhibition include: John Ottis Adams, George Adomeit, George Ames Aldrich, May Ames, Otto Bacher, L. Clarence Ball, Karl Albert Buehr, V.J. Cariani, William Clusmann, Frank Virgil Dudley, Maude Eggemeyer, William J. Forsyth, Alexis Jean Fournier, Marie Goth, Frederick Gottwald, Carl Graf, Louis Oscar (L.O.) Griffith, Lucie Hartrath, Emil Jacques, Karl Kappes, Lewis Henry Meakin, Pauline Palmer, Louis Ritman, Ada Walter Shultz, Adolph Shultz, Otto Stark, Theodore Clement (T.C.) Steele, John Henry Twachtman, Will Vawter, Abel Warshawsky and Edward K. Williams.

Midwestern Visions of Impressionism: 1890-1930 opens July 31 with a tour of the exhibition by curator Christine Fowler Shearer from 5-6 p.m. and a reception from 6-8 p.m. Shearer will lead a second tour of the exhibition from noon to 1 p.m.

Aug. 1. Riffe Gallery events are free.

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Registration is required as space is limited, and all children must be accompanied by a registered adult. Registration begins July 9 and ends July 25. Register online at www.riffegallery.org

The Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery is located in the Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts, 77 S. High St., Columbus.

Gallery summer hours are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday; from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday; from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursday; from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Friday; and from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. (Summer hours are Aug. 1 through Sept. 30.) The gallery is closed Monday and state holidays. Admission is free.

Visit www.riffegallery.org or phone (614) 644-9624 for more information.

Free group tours are available Wednesday through Friday throughout the run of each exhibition. To schedule a group tour

contact Riffe Gallery Director Mary Gray at mary.gray@oac.state.oh.us or (614) 728-2239.

This exhibition was organized by the Massillon Museum with funding from the Ohio Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts as part of American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius, Canton/Stark County CVB and Stark Community Foundation. Additional support from the Ohio Building Authority and media sponsors Alive, CD101, City Scene, *Ohio Magazine* and Time Warner Cable.

The Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery showcases the work of Ohio's artists and curators, exhibitions produced by the Ohio Arts Council's International Program and the collections of the region's museums and galleries. The Riffe Gallery's Education Program seeks to increase public appreciation and understanding of those exhibitions. Admission is free. For information, call the Riffe Gallery at (614) 644-9624.

The Ohio Arts Council is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally and economically.

The Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery will present *Midwestern Visions of Impressionism: 1890-1930* from July 31 through Oct. 12.

This exhibition takes a fresh look at the American Impressionism movement through the paintings of 31 artists born or raised in the Midwest and working between 1890 and 1930. In addition to bringing attention to the often overlooked talent of Ohio, Illinois and Indiana, *Midwestern Visions of Impressionism* explores where these artists fit within the larger context of American Impressionism and how their regions informed their painting.

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"These artists, many of whom were from the Midwest, studied academic art in places such as Paris and Munich, while also being exposed to the nonacademic traditions in these cities. As their styles evolved, they incorporated this exposure into their artwork, resulting in a form of Impressionism that combined academic style with