



Wake Forest University
Art Collections

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The Wake Forest University Art Collections consist mainly of prints and paintings, with a growing presence of sculpture and photography. The collections include contemporary American art, art that has special significance to Wake Forest University, and museum quality art of different periods.

The Simmons Collection, donated in 1941, was the first major art collection and the impetus for the other collections that followed. During graduation ceremonies June 1941, Wake Forest formally accepted and dedicated the art collection of Thomas Jackson Simmons, President Emeritus of Brenau College in Gainesville, Georgia, and Wake Forest Alumnus. Referring to his correspondence with Wake Forest President Thurman Kitchin, Simmons wrote, "I told him then of what had seemed an unrealizable dream of mine, that my art museum, instead of being sold and scattered after my death, should in some way become the nucleus of a large and growing art museum the cultural value of which would increase constantly through the years."

Although his collection is not presently shown as a whole, Dr. Simmons' dream has been realized in the growth of the Wake Forest University Art Collections. Through systematic collecting, gifts, and bequests there are now nine collections numbering over 1300 works of art. They are the Portrait Collection, General Collection, Student Union Collection, Print Collection, R. J. Reynolds Collection, Student Art Collection, Simmons Collection, R. Philip Hanes Collection and the Graylyn Collection. A valuable and irreplaceable cultural asset, they provide an excellent visual arts environment and teaching resource supporting the University's educational mission of preparing "men and women for personal enrichment, enlightened citizenship, and professional life."

Kathryn McHenry, Curator
Permanent Art Collection

"Among the various art collections at Wake Forest University, the Student Union Collection of contemporary art is unique. It is unique not only to Wake Forest but perhaps in the entire country in that it has been entirely put together by students who, every fourth year, travel to New York during spring break to purchase the art. And what an experience for the participants! It is the students who research the artists, make the gallery or studio appointments with dealers and artists, and it is the students who have the final say in the selection of the works of art to be added to the collection. Year after year, I hear the groups say that this "real life" experience was the most valuable and rewarding part of their Wake Forest education. The lasting quality and richness of the collection is a credit to the hard work and insight of those students who have participated in the program over the last forty years."

Robert Knott
Professor, Art History



Keith Haring 1958-1990.
Untitled, 1982, Day-Glo paint and ink on paper, 52" x 40", Student Union Collection. A 1980s New York Graffiti artist, Haring used universal signs and symbols. Anything and everything was his canvas, including subway walls, tarps, and his own body. Here, Haring paints a break dancer in his simplified style. The energy is generated by his use of black lines on a neon yellow surface.

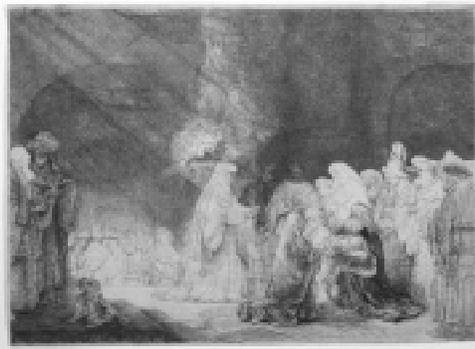
William Merritt Chase 1849-1916.
Spanish Girl, 1886, oil on mahogany wood panel, 26" x 15", R. Philip Hanes Collection. Chase painted this portrait of his young wife, Alice, when they were first married. Blending his American roots and European instruction, Chase was a master of painterly method and a superb teacher. His students included Demuth, O'Keefe and Sheeler. Donated by Charlotte and R. Philip Hanes.



Pablo Picasso 1881-1973. *La Femme au Chapeau*, 1957, color linoleum cut, 25" x 18", Student Union Collection. Picasso, father of Cubism and Modern Art, is considered the most influential artist of the 20th century. This linoleum cut, a tribute to a woman friend, was one of a very few done late in life.

Milton Avery 1885-1965. *Morning News*, 1960, oil wash on paper, 30" x 42", Student Union Collection. Avery simplified his forms into broad, flat areas of close-valued color. Though representational, his work has very little detail. In this painting, a water color effect was created by using thinned oils. Painted late in his career, *Morning News* represents a nostalgia for the simple life.





Rembrandt van Rijn 1606-1669. *Presentation in Temple*, 1640, 8" x 11", etching, Print Collection. Rembrandt was one of printmaking's most gifted and innovative etchers. While most artists perfect a single manner, Rembrandt varied his technique to suit each subject. In this scene the aged Temple prophetess, Anna, is the central figure. It is thought that this print was a tribute to his mother who was central in his life and who had died in 1640.



Albert Bierstadt 1830-1902. *Niagara*, 1869, oil on canvas, 49" x 35", Simmons Collection. Bierstadt, a painter of the "Hudson River" and "Rocky Mountain" Schools, specialized in monumental New World landscapes. He was among the most internationally honored American artists of the 19th century. Donated by Dr. Thomas J. Simmons.

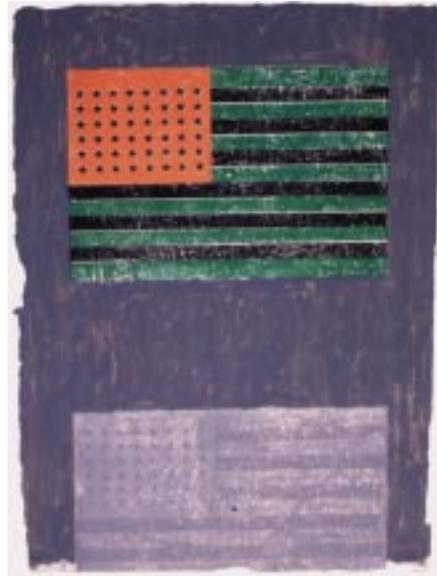
John Singer Sargent 1856-1925. *L. A. Harrison, Esquire*, 1910-1915, oil sketch on canvas, 31" x 22", General Collection. The cosmopolitan and expatriate Sargent was trained in the Old Master style of Rembrandt and Velazquez. He went on to paint dazzling portraits of the rich and powerful as in this painting of L. A. Harrison, British artist and longtime friend of Sargent. Donated by Anna Hanes Chatham.



John Singleton Copley 1738-1815. *Mrs. Daniel Rogers*, 1762, oil on canvas, 50" x 40", R. Philip Hanes Collection. Copley's portraits of pre-revolution landed gentry secured him lasting fame as one of America's foremost portrait painters. In later years, he went on to become one of England's most respected historical painters. Donated by Charlotte and R. Philip Hanes, this is the most valuable painting in our collections.



Jasper Johns Born 1930. *Flags*, 1968, color lithograph, 35" x 26", Student Union Collection. Johns' paintings of commonplace flags, targets, and numbers were an abrupt departure from 1950s Abstract Expressionist Art and the forerunner of Pop Art. The flag, a recurring theme throughout his career, appeared in his first exhibition in 1958. Johns is one of the most innovative lithographers of our era and master of all mediums he has tried.



Louise Nevelson 1899-1988. *Night Zag III*, 1971, painted wood, 34" x 42" x 4", Student Union Collection. Perhaps the most celebrated female sculptor in the history of American modernism, Nevelson created her signature work as wall sculpture. These pieces, usually painted black, consisted of found objects and compartmental frameworks of varying depths.

Julian Stanczak Born 1928. *Forced to Choose*, 1995, acrylic on canvas, 71" x 106", General Collection. Stanczak was a pioneer of Optical Art, also known as Op Art and Color Function Painting, in the 1960s. Stanczak's pulsating compositions often reflect everyday sights, the rhythms of winding roads, and gradations of color in sunsets. Donated by alumnus Neil Rector.



This catalog was prepared for
Jewels in Our Crowns features from the
Wake Forest University Collections
an exhibition celebrating the 60th anniversary of their founding

August 24 - October 14, 2001
Wake Forest University Fine Arts Gallery

Dr. Thomas Jackson Simmons, 1864-1942, President Emeritus
and Professor of Philosophy, Brenau College (now University),
Wake Forest Alumnus (A.M., LL.D., Wake Forest College)

"The WFU Fine Arts Collection provides a wonderful opportunity for art students to see the application and transformation of the techniques they study in art classes. It brings our teaching alive but, more importantly, the collection is a unique opportunity for everyone — faculty, staff and students — to work, live and study in an environment enriched by visual art. I often hear students remark on something they see in one of the collection pieces that pertains to something studied in another area. It may be a student referring to something learned in color theory and perception, a science class, or a literature student finding an image in a painting that evokes a line in a poem recently read. In a subtle yet vital way, the collection prompts students to make connections across the disciplines. To me this is the essence of education."

Page Laughlin
Associate Professor, Studio Art

Kiki Smith Born 1954. *My Blue Lake*, 1995, lithograph and photogravure, 43" x 54", General Collection. Smith is a sculptor, illustrator, and print artist. The human body, both inside and out, provides the subject matter of her powerfully expressive art. Gift of the children of alumna Katherine Woodard and her husband Nelson Blitz, Jr.



Front Cover:

Alex Katz Born 1927. *Vincent with Open Mouth*, 1970, oil on canvas, 96" x 72", Student Union Collection. Katz, a forerunner of Pop Art, is known for his large-scale portraits of family and friends. He used broad, unmodulated areas of color as seen in this portrait of his son.

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