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Robert Henri: a Nebraska Legend

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Robert Henri: a Nebraska Legend



THE PINK PINAFORE, 1926, oil on canvas, 1930.H-41

**Selections from the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery
and Sculpture Garden**

The Twelfth Annual Sheldon Statewide Exhibition 1998-99



GIRL ON BEACH, CONCARNEAU
1889, oil on canvas, 13 x 16 in.
UNL-Gift of Mrs. Olga N. Sheldon, 1984.U-3364

With an impressionist approach, Henri portrays a young Breton woman in archaic peasant dress seated in the blazing light of the morning sun.



QUAY AT CONCARNEAU
1899, oil on canvas, 25 3/4 x 32 in.
NAA-Gift of the Chapellier Galleries, 1970.N-246

At Concarneau, on the coast of Brittany, Henri welcomed a chance to paint out of doors, depicting women in black dresses and white coifs silhouetted against a background of sailboats moored in the distance.



BOOTHBAY HARBOR
1910, oil on canvas, 26 x 32 in.
UNL-Gift of Mrs. Olga N. Sheldon, 1966.U-499

The artist's dark palette of blacks and browns appropriate to city scenes was lightened to a brighter, more atmospheric coloration when he painted during the summer months in places such as Boothbay Harbor on the coast of Maine.



WOODS INTERIOR
1905, charcoal on paper, 12 x 11 3/4 in.
UNL-Gift of the Maynard Walker Gallery, New York
1963.U-444

"Landscape is a medium for ideas...the various details in a landscape...mean nothing to us if they do not express some mood of nature as felt by the artist." Robert Henri, in *The Art Spirit*.



MERRY CHRISTMAS CARD
1914, ink and colored pencil on paper, 3 1/2 x 4 1/2 in.
UNL-Gift of Mrs. Olga N. Sheldon, 1984.U-3500

Henri caricatures himself and his red-haired wife, Marjorie, in this holiday greeting of 1914.



HAPPY NEW YEAR 1915
1915, ink and colored pencil on paper, 3 1/2 x 4 1/2 in.
UNL-Gift of Mrs. Olga N. Sheldon, 1984.U-3501

With a simple ink and colored pencil sketch and the greeting, "best of luck in 1915, from us," Henri conveys good wishes from himself and his wife.

NOTES FROM
HENRI TO
EUGENE
SPEICHER
n.d., ink on paper
8 1/2 x 5 1/2 in.
UNL-Gift of
Mrs. Olga N.
Sheldon
1984.U-3497

Speicher was an
artist who became
part of Henri's
"inner circle"
after the 1913
Armory Show. In
this ink sketch,
Henri introduces
Speicher to model,
Betalo Rubino,
the subject of
numerous Henri
portraits.



ROLAND
KNOEDLER
RECEIVING
HENRI AND
TWO OTHERS OF
THE EIGHT
n.d., ink on paper
10 1/2 x 7 1/2
in.
UNL-Gift of
Mrs. Olga N.
Sheldon
1984.U-3492

Roland Knoedler
owned a
leading commer-
cial gallery, still
in existence, in
New York. In
this caricature,
Knoedler,
appearing aloof
and imperious,
looms over Henri
and two others of
The Eight.



HOW SLOAN
WOULD HAVE
WORKED
n.d., conté crayon
on paper
8 1/2 x 3 3/4 in.
UNL-Gift of Mrs.
Olga N. Sheldon
1984.U-3493

Henri's good
friend, artist
John Sloan, por-
trayed with top
hat and
spectacles, is the
subject of this
cartoon-like
conté crayon
sketch.



ROBERT HENRI: A NEBRASKA LEGEND

Statewide Touring Exhibition
Program Schedule
1998-1999

Chadron, August 24 - September 25

Memorial Hall Main Gallery
Local Sponsor: Chadron State College

North Platte, September 26 - October 30

The Mall
Local Sponsors: NebraskaLand National
Bank; North Platte Telegraph; Ross Perry
Motors and Crossroads Dodge-Cadillac,
Oldsmobile, Dodge, Jeep and Eagle; United
Nebraska Bank; Western Nebraska National
Bank; First Federal Lincoln Bank

Grand Island, November 1 - November 27

Grand Island Public Library
Local Sponsors: Grand Island Public Schools;
Home Federal

Holdrege, November 29 - January 8

Phelps County Museum
Local Sponsors: Dr. & Mrs. Stuart Embury;
Dr. & Mrs. Wayne Quincy; Dr. & Mrs. Doak
Doolittle; First National Bank of Holdrege;
Holdrege School Foundation; National Art
Honor Society, Holdrege Chapter

Aurora, January 9 - January 29

Plainsman Museum
Local Sponsor: Hamilton Community
Foundation, Inc.

Fremont, January 31 - February 26

Fremont Area Art Association
Local Sponsor: Fremont Area Art
Association

Beatrice, February 28 - March 26

Gage County Historical Museum
Local Sponsor: Beatrice National Bank &
Trust

Columbus, March 28 - April 23

Columbus Art Gallery
Local Sponsors: Columbus Art Gallery;
Columbus Area Arts Council; Columbus
Public Schools Foundation

McCook, April 25 - May 28

Museum of the High Plains
Local Sponsor: McCook Arts Council

Cozad, May 30 - July 2

Robert Henri Museum and
Historical Walkway
Local Sponsors: Cozad Area Arts Council
and Friends of the Henri Museum

Cambridge, August 1 - September 3

Cambridge Museum
Local Sponsor: Cambridge Museum Foundation,
Inc.

York, September 7 - September 24

Cornerstone Bank
Local Sponsor: Cornerstone Bank

Nebraska City, September 26 - October 29

Morton-James Public Library
Local Sponsor: Donations to the Library

PORTRAIT OF WILLIAM J. GLACKENS
 1904, oil on canvas
 78 x 38 in.
 NAA-Thomas C. Woods Memorial
 1970.N-247

Glackens, an artist and close friend of Henri's, recalled posing for this portrait. "I have on a gorgeous white vest that I purchased for \$1.50 on the way up here." Henri gave this painting and the portrait of Mrs. Glackens to the couple as a wedding gift.



PORTRAIT OF EDITH DIMOCK GLACKENS
 1902-04, oil on canvas
 76 3/4 x 38 3/8 in.
 NAA-Gift of Miss Alice Abel, Mr. & Mrs. Gene H. Tallman, The Abel Foundation, and Mrs. Olga N. Sheldon. 1970.N-245

Henri began this full-length portrait when Edith Dimock was a Hartford, CT, socialite. It was completed two years later when she became the bride of Henri's friend, William Glackens.



PORTRAIT OF IRA GLACKENS
 1911, oil on canvas
 24 1/4 x 20 3/8 in.
 UNL-Gift of Ira Glackens
 1989.U-4193

Four years old when this portrait was painted, Ira, son of William and Edith Glackens, recalls his terror at the "dizzy height of the model stand - I felt as if I were on top of the Eiffel [sic] Tower!"



THE PINK PINAFORE
 1926, oil on canvas
 24 x 20 in.
 UNL-F.M.
 Hall Collection
 1930.H-41

Many of Henri's late portraits were devoted to children whom he befriended while staying at Achill Island off the coast of Ireland. Mary Ann Cafferty, pictured here in a pink apron over her dark blue dress, was a favorite subject.



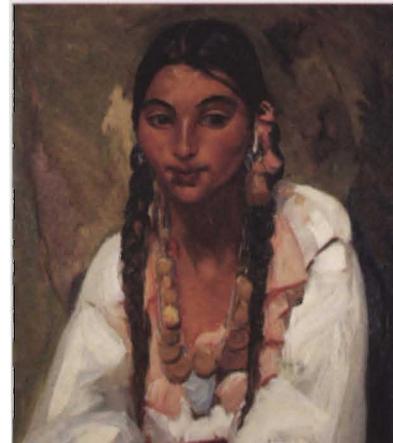
PORTRAIT OF FRANK L. SOUTHRN
 1904, oil on canvas
 32 x 26 in.
 UNL-Gift of Mrs. Olga N. Sheldon
 1982.U-3363

Henri's painting of his brother conveys a strong sense of the subject's physical presence, with the right side of the face and collar highlighted against a dark background. Notice the resemblance to Henri's mother in the *Portrait of Mrs. R.H. Lee*.



GYPSY GIRL IN WHITE
 1916, oil on canvas
 24 x 20 in.
 UNL-Howard S. Wilson Memorial
 1982.U-3113

Painted in the summer of 1916 during Henri's first visit to Santa Fe, this portrait reflects a sympathetic bond he felt with the environment and with a diversity of ethnic traditions.



NIGHT,
FOURTEENTH
OF JULY
c.1895-97, oil
on canvas
32 x 25 3/4 in.
NAA-Nelle
Cochrane Woods
Memorial
1959.N-120

Rows of red lanterns sparkle above the crowds in Robert Henri's interpretation of a nighttime celebration of Bastille Day in Paris.



SELF
PORTRAIT
1903, oil on
canvas
32 x 26 in.
UNL-Gift of
Mrs. Olga N.
Sheldon
1982.U-3365

Started and completed in one day, Henri's self-portrait exemplifies his belief that, "the simpler a background is the better the figure in front of it will be, and...the better the figure is the less the observer will need entertainment in the background."



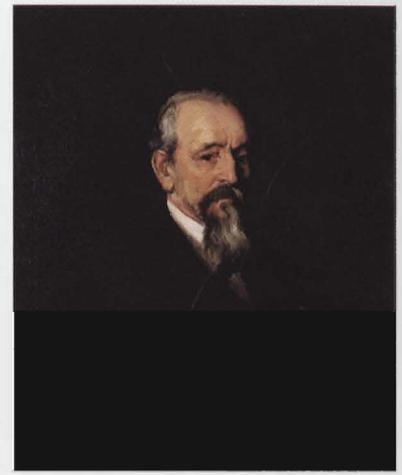
PORTRAIT OF
MRS. R.H.
LEE
1914, oil on
canvas
32 x 26 in.
UNL-Gift of the
Cozad State
Bank and Mrs.
Olga N. Sheldon
1970.U-709

The subject of this portrait is Theresa Gatewood Cozad (Mrs. John J. Cozad), Robert Henri's mother. She took the name Mrs. Richard Henry Lee in 1882 when the family adopted new identities following her husband's indictment for murder in Cozad, NE.



PORTRAIT OF
JOHN J.
COZAD
1903, oil on
canvas
32 x 26 in.
UNL-Gift of Mrs.
Olga N. Sheldon
1982.U-3361

The artist's father is the subject of this portrait from the first decade of the century, when Henri took his inspiration from Spanish painters of the Baroque period.



MARIA Y
CONSUELO
1906, oil on
canvas
78 x 38 in.
UNL-Gift of Mrs.
Olga N. Sheldon
1982.U-3362

Henri painted several portraits of this young Spanish gypsy woman and her child who presented themselves at his studio in Madrid in the summer of 1906. The subjects are depicted with a rich palette and robust painting style.



STREET SCENE
1904, etching, 2 3/4 x 4 in.
UNL-Gift of Mrs. Olga N. Sheldon, 1984.U-3495

Using an earlier sketch titled *Street in Paris*, the artist produced his first etching of a bustling thoroughfare. The linear shading process with etching needle on copper plate was too slow for Henri and he did not continue to work in this medium.

ROBERT HENRI: A NEBRASKA LEGEND

Robert Henri: a Nebraska Legend, the twelfth in a series of Sheldon Statewide exhibitions, is a result of the uniquely successful partnership between the staff of the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden and our principal funding support group, the Nebraska Art Association, a nonprofit volunteer membership organization dedicated to the advancement of the visual arts in Nebraska, and twenty-two Nebraska communities that have served as exhibition venues since the inception of the program in 1987. Local sponsors who support the exhibition in their communities, and volunteer docents who disseminate important information to the school children and adults of Nebraska have been equally invaluable to the success of Sheldon Statewide. *Robert Henri: a Nebraska Legend* serves as a primary example of the University of Nebraska's outreach mission in sharing the renowned Sheldon Gallery collection of American art with the citizens of Nebraska. Following are excerpts from an essay for a Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery exhibition catalogue, "Robert Henri and the Eight," 1971, by noted Henri scholar William Innes Homer:

"Robert Henri (born Robert Henry Cozad) was one of the great personalities in the history of American art. He was a talented painter, a dedicated teacher, and an influential writer. Most important historically is the role that he played in bringing about profound changes in American art around the turn of the century. Because he believed in the freedom of the individual and progress in art, he fought vigorously against blind obedience to established artistic standards and championed a more liberal attitude which gave free rein to the artist's creative instincts."

"Since a great part of Henri's influence resulted from the strength of his personality, an understanding of the man and his background is essential. Until recently, the facts of his early life were unknown to the public. However, since 1955, this knowledge has come to light and it can now be seen that his formative years played a crucial role in shaping the character of the man who became a central motivating force for artistic progress in this country."

"Henri's father, John Jackson Cozad, grew up in Ohio and, as a young man, earned his living as a gambler, an occupation which was at that time considered an honorable profession among gentlemen. In 1857 he married Theresa Gatewood, an attractive young lady from West Virginia (the painting in this exhibition shows her as a mature woman) and took her to Cincinnati to live. There Cozad gave up professional gambling, turned to real estate promotion, and founded a town called Cozadale near Cincinnati. In Cincinnati his two sons were born: John Cozad in 1862 (John became a medical doctor in Philadelphia; the portrait in the exhibition depicts him in his early forties, after he had changed his name to Frank L. Southrn) and Robert Henry Cozad in 1865. The family remained in Cincinnati for several years and then moved to the great plains of Nebraska, where the father established another town, named Cozad, in Dawson County. The town was inhabited primarily by farmers, and because their farms were occupying choice grazing land, Henri's father encountered difficulties with the established cattle ranchers who had been there before him. One evening in 1882, a [rancher] attacked the elder Cozad with a knife, and, in self-defense, Cozad drew a pistol and shot him. Fearing for his own life, he fled from the town that he had founded, never to live there again. (Later a coroner's jury cleared him of the charge.) Several months after this incident, the Cozads were reunited in Denver. To conceal his family's true identity and to be free of any hint of scandal in the future, John Jackson Cozad changed his name to Richard H. Lee, his son John's to Frank L. Southrn, and Robert's to Robert Earl Henri, and passed them off as his adopted children."

The effects of Henri's tumultuous early years have been the subject of speculation among various authors. His strong humanist leanings and respect for the individual have been attributed to his early life in the west. More important perhaps is the fact that he overcame those unsettled early years to become a visionary teacher and vanguard artist of the early twentieth century. Robert Henri's art spirit is alive today in this comprehensive documentation of his illustrious career. We welcome viewers to learn more about Henri and his little known roots in Nebraska.

Nancy H. Dawson, Community Programs Coordinator



Sheldon Statewide is sponsored in part by the Nebraska Art Association. Nebraska Art Association programs are supported in part by a Basic Support Grant from the Nebraska Arts Council, a State agency. The University of Nebraska's Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden is one of only 750 of the nation's 8,000 museums to be accredited by the American Association of Museums