

Oct. 6, 2021

Media Contact:
Tami Wroath, Director of Marketing and Public Relations
Harn Museum of Art
352.317.4583
twroath@harn.ufl.edu

Florida Impressions Exhibition Opens at the University of Florida’s Harn Museum of Art

The exhibition includes more than fifty paintings depicting the state’s environment, people and history, and celebrates the transformative gift of 1,200 works of art from Sam and Robbie Vickers; includes works by Martin Johnson Heade, Thomas Moran and Louis Comfort Tiffany.

GAINESVILLE, FL, Oct. 6, 2021—*Florida Impressions: Gift of Samuel H. and Roberta T. Vickers* celebrates the transformative gift from Sam and Robbie Vickers who formed one of the most extensive collections of Florida-themed art. The exhibition, which opened on September 21 at the University of Florida’s Harn Museum of Art, will



Thomas Moran (American, 1837-1926), *Old Watchtower at St. Augustine*, 1881, The Florida Art Collection, Gift of Samuel H. and Roberta T. Vickers, Photography by Randy Batista

remain permanently on view. Curated by Dulce Román, the Harn’s Chief Curator and Curator for Modern Art, it follows the inaugural exhibition of the gift, *A Florida Legacy*, and includes more than 50 paintings representing 45 artists. The selected works on display cover a broad range of themes from scenic views of coastlines and waterways, to depictions of historic landmarks, and scenes capturing popular forms of entertainment enjoyed by locals and tourists alike. Collectively, these paintings comprise a visual history of Florida, its unique topography and climate, as well as its people and their daily lives.

“Early visitors to Florida in the late 19th century, when much of the state was relatively inaccessible, included nationally prominent artists who are well represented in the exhibition. Examples include Martin Johnson Heade, Herman Herzog, Thomas Moran and Louis Comfort Tiffany. Inspired by the tropical beauty of the Florida landscape, many of these artists sought health, recreation and adventure as promoted in

the travel literature of the day,” said Román. *Florida Impressions* also includes works by celebrated artists who visited Florida in the early to mid 20th century when tourism was booming due to greater accessibility through increased rail and road networks. Examples include Ralston Crawford, Ernest Lawson, Everett Shinn and Marguerite Zorach. The exhibition also features lesser-known figures such as Albert Backus, George Bertrand Mitchell and Jane Peterson, among many others.



Samuel H. and Roberta T. Vickers
Photograph by Randy Batista

The selection on view in *Florida Impressions* represents a small portion of the more than 1,200 works of art included in this major gift to the Harn Museum from Sam and Robbie Vickers at the end of 2020. The Jacksonville couple began meticulously and devotedly assembling their collection 40 years ago. The scope and importance of the Vickers' collection has added considerably to the museum's strategic plan. It will include the construction of a new wing designed by world renowned architects, Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects | Partners, and the expansion will feature galleries, a print study room and conservation center for the display and study of the collection. The museum is currently engaged in robust fundraising efforts to secure support for the expansion of the museum as a part of the University of Florida's capital campaign.

Since the inaugural exhibition of the couple's collection at the Harn earlier this year, education has remained at the forefront of the gift. "The Vickers' gift is an important new resource for the Harn and the University of Florida to strengthen faculty collaboration, support teaching and enhance class tours, and provide research projects for future study," said Dr. Lee Anne Chesterfield, Harn Museum of Art Director. "The Harn has already formed multiple internships and an interdisciplinary UF Honors course titled 'Florida in the Frame,' which all focus on the collection. We are so very thankful to Sam and Robbie Vickers for their generosity, and continue to place education at the forefront of their collection as we plan for its new home with the expansion project."

About the Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art

Founded in 1990, the Harn Museum of Art is an integral part of the University of Florida. The Harn contributes to an interconnected, international community by integrating the arts and culture into curricula throughout the university's system of colleges and centers. Its holdings include more than 13,300 works in five main collecting areas: Asian art, African art, photography, modern art of the Americas and Europe, and international contemporary art. The museum also has noteworthy collections of Oceanic, Ancient American Art and works on paper. In addition to rotating installations drawn from its permanent collection, the Harn organizes traveling exhibitions and virtual educational programs for adults, students and children.

The Harn Museum of Art, at 3259 Hull Road in Gainesville, Florida, is part of the University of Florida's Cultural Plaza, which is also home to the Florida Museum of Natural History and the Phillips Center for the Performing Arts. Admission is free. Hours are 10 am to 5 pm, Tuesday through Saturday and 1 to 5 pm Sunday. For more information visit harn.ufl.edu.



Albert Ernest Backus (American, 1906-1990)
Road Through the Orange Grove, undated
The Florida Art Collection, Gift of Samuel H. and Roberta T. Vickers, Photograph by Randy Batista

###