

MoNA

Museum of Northwest Art



"Return to Odysseus: Tribute to Nikos Kazantzakis," William Cumming, 1984, tempera on board, MoNA Permanent Collection, gift of Marshall and Helen Hatch

Re Building

Celebrating the Role of the Permanent Collection in Building Up MoNA's Significance, Past and Present

August 5 - October 1, 2023

Re Building, from the Latin in re: "in the matter of" or "regarding"

On the occasion of completing upgrades to the museum's HVAC system and building's roof, the exhibition *Re Building* celebrates the Museum of Northwest Art's Permanent Collection and its role writ large in building up and cementing the reputation of the institution as a remarkable repository of the modern and contemporary trajectory of Northwest art.

Since its founding in 1981 by Art Hupy (1924 - 2003)—the museum's first Director and Curator—MoNA has devoted resources to collecting and preserving artworks and cultural objects from the Northwest region for the enjoyment and appreciation of future generations. At the core of the collection is the seminal work of the 'Big Four': Guy Anderson, Kenneth Callahan, Morris Graves, and Mark Tobey who inspired by the landscape and unique quality of the light of the Skagit Valley, between the 1930s-1950s created works of lyrical beauty—as well as the work of a cadre of younger artists who felt the mystique of these Northwest Masters and in a renewed impetus carried their transcendental emotions and moody, misty approaches well into the 1990s.



"Untitled (Northwest Landscape with Church)," Morris Graves, 1935, oil on un-sized Bemis bag on stretcher in frame, 27" x 33.25", MoNA Permanent Collection, gift of Mary Randlett

Building upon the vision of Hupy, Susan Parke who served as MoNA's Executive Director from 1990 to 2007, played a significant role in elevating the profile of the institution and establishing the Museum as a regional destination. During her tenure, Parke was instrumental in expanding the Museum's permanent collection, growing its scope and breadth beyond the Northwest School to strategically reflect a broader swath of artistic sensibilities—equally defining the Northwest art scene.



"Invitation to Dance," Lucinda Parker, oil on canvas, 60" x 84", MoNA Permanent Collection, gift of the Paul I. Gingrich, Jr. Collection

The past 15 years have seen the Museum's collecting priorities shaped by new numerous factors, from world events to our evolving cultural and social values due to the accelerating interconnectedness between the regional art scenes and global realities. We have engaged deeply with contemporary art, with an eye to making the Collection become more broadly representative of the wealth of narratives in the region, encompassing diverse communities and lived experiences, such as Black, Latino, Asian American, LGBTQ+, and Indigenous artists. However, as one can imagine, there is work to be done in building a collection capable of instilling a sense of belonging in every visitor that walks into the galleries. ***This is a work in progress, where constant progress is the end goal.***

Since MoNA's early days, building the Permanent Collection has meant building the reputation of the Museum: as a resource entrusted to the care of the institution for the enjoyment of the community, the collection has been a cornerstone of building participation, building community and sense of belonging, building opportunities for learning from one another, and ultimately building together.

Today, MoNA's Permanent Collection includes over 2,400 artworks ranging across all media and spanning from the early 1900s to the present. In its entirety, the collection speaks of key aspects of the rich artistic history of the Northwest and reflects the cultural sensibilities and shifts that have informed, and continue to inform, the experience of living in this region. As we celebrate better and safer conditions for the art, we are reminded that the Permanent Collection is a living document that honors our culture's past and continues to tell our story into the future.



"Rose Madder Deep Macchia with Antwerp Blue Lip Wrap," Dale Chihuly, 1986, Blown Glass, MoNA Permanent Collection, Gift of Makiko Ichiura

About the Northwest School

The Northwest School of artists, an art movement of the 1930s-1940s rooted in the rich cultural soil of the Pacific Northwest, gained prominence through "the big four": Guy Anderson, Kenneth Callahan, Morris Graves, and Mark Tobey. Their art was shaped by the region's moody misty landscapes and influenced by Asian aesthetics. The school encompassed painting, sculpture, printmaking, and photography. While the 1930s and 1940s had seen Graves, Tobey, and Callahan receive recognition both in the Pacific Northwest (Seattle Art Museum, Portland Art Museum) and in New York (Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum), it was a 1953 LIFE magazine feature titled Mystic Painters of the Northwest that propelled their fame beyond the region, as well as their work, and solidified "the big four" as artists to recognize expanding Northwest art's definition beyond its original link to Native American art.

Following in the footsteps of the "the big four" more than twenty artists are credited with being affiliated with the Northwest school: some studied under them, others were encouraged by them but not taught, while some looked at the 'big four' for inspiration without having any form of contact. The Museum of Northwest Art's Permanent Collection includes the work of the following Northwest School artists: Doris Totten Chase, William Cumming, Richard Gilkey, Paul Horiuchi, Clayton James, William Ivey, Helmi Juvonen, Leo Kenney, John Franklin Koenig, Philip McCracken, Neil Meitzler, Carl Morris, Hilda Morris, Ambrose Patterson, Jay Steensma, George Tsutakawa, Windsor Utley, James W. Washington Jr. and Wesley Wehr.

Visual Thinking Strategies

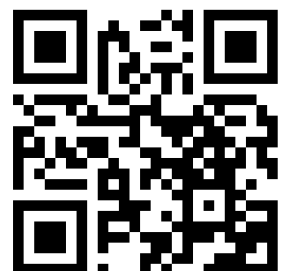
Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) is a research-based teaching method that promotes aesthetic development including critical thinking and communication skills. Here at MoNA, we use VTS to engage students and general visitors with art encouraging them to observe closely, think critically and discuss respectfully. VTS teaches participants to take the time to observe closely, describe what they see in detail and provide evidence for their observations.

To facilitate a VTS discussion, you first encourage viewers to take a quiet moment to observe the work you are going to explore. Then you ask the following questions and paraphrase the responses without adding any of your own judgements.

What's going on in this picture?
What do you see that makes you say...?
What more can you find?

These three VTS questions ask everyone to focus, become reflective, and to question - the basis for critical thinking. Answering the questions is engaging and fun because no one is going to be wrong.

For more information about
Visual Thinking Strategies,
visit www.vtshome.org
or scan this QR code!



What's happening at MoNA?

Scan this QR code to visit our Event Calendar!

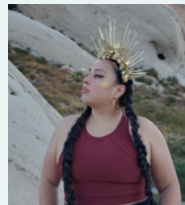


Upcoming Classes



Flower Mosaics with Katie Walton

August 26, 2023
1:00 - 3:30 PM



Intergenerational Crown Making

September 9, 2023
2:00 - 4:00 PM



Drawings are For All of Us One at a Time:

Lecture by Margaret
Davidson

September 23, 2023
1:00 - 3:30 PM



Drawing Exploratory:

Class by Margaret
Davidson

September 30, 2023
11:00 AM - 5:00 PM



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