

# Myths, Fables, and Fortunes: Our Place within the Landscape



**Large Print Labels**

## ***Myths, Fables, and Fortunes: Our Place within the Landscape***

*Myths, Fables, and Fortunes* is a journey of discovery focused on the natural environment of the Northwest. Drawn from the Museum's Permanent Collection and spanning over six decades, the exhibition highlights our shifting perspectives and connection with the land during a period of dramatic change and development.

Our relationship with the land conveys a compelling narrative of who we are as individuals and as a culture. With nature as the setting—its forests, plants, rivers, and animals—these artists share critical stories and lessons that both inform and shape the destiny of future generations. Whether conveying the

iconic beauty and grandeur of the wilderness, or probing the complex environmental, social, and economic issues entwined with our shared ecology, the works in *Myths, Fables, and Fortunes* reveal our ever-evolving connection to the natural world.

*Organized by the Boise Art Museum*

## **Robert Glenn Ketchum**

(b. 1947, Los Angeles, CA)

***Trail Creek Beaver Pond,***  
1972

Cibachrome

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*  
*Gift of Jack B. Ketchum*



## Gallery 10

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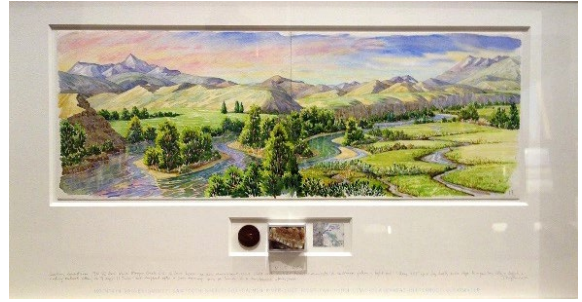
### **Conservation and the Artist Explorer**

*Myths, Fables, and Fortunes* features pristine views of the land, as well as more sobering imagery documenting the detrimental impact of human development on our environment. Today, many artists are committed to an ongoing exploration of the power and attraction of the natural landscape. For these artists, physical observation and experience are fundamental to their creative process.

Since the beginning of human-generated imagery, artists have depicted the ecosystems and wildlife of the Northwest. As nature has become more accessible, it has also undergone significant human impact and habitat loss. Artists, especially photographers, have become important conservation activists as they visually advocate for protecting the land's fragile ecology to ensure it for future generations.

## Tony Foster

(b. 1946, Lincolnshire,  
England)



### ***Mile 162.5 (from the Whole Salmon project),*** 2003

Pencil, watercolor on paper, discarded  
epidermis, Lewis and Clark medal, map  
*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*

Since 1982, British artist Tony Foster has completed a series of “journeys”—painting projects that have centered on modern wilderness expeditions similar to those completed by 19th-century explorers such as Thomas Moran (1837-1926) and Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902). For each journey, the artist-explorer creates lush watercolor diaries, some of which may take as long as a decade to complete, over the course of several journeys. Foster’s travels have ranged from

mountains and canyons to rainforests, coral reefs, and rivers. Often, the artist endures harsh weather and challenging travel conditions to document remote sites in his paintings.

In 2002, Foster was commissioned by Idaho's Sun Valley Center for the Arts to conduct a new journey as part of *The Whole Salmon* project. For his project, Foster produced a chronological series of watercolors that depicted his experience traveling down Idaho's 406-mile-long Salmon River. *Mile 162.5* is one of 31 artworks from Foster's month-long journey, a vibrant light-filled landscape with a meandering river that captures the beauty, diversity, and history of the Salmon River.

## Laura McPhee

(b. 1958, New York, NY)



***Understory FlareUps,  
Fourth of July Creek,  
Valley Road Wildfire, Custer County, Idaho,  
2005***

Chromogenic print

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection  
Collectors Forum Purchase, 2007*

Laura McPhee seeks meaning in the history and language of place through her large-scale color photographs that juxtapose historical respect for the American landscape with the unforgiving reality of our contemporary environment. Moving between past and present, she combines historical photographic methods, such as an 8 x 10 view camera with digital imaging, capturing our evolving

perceptions of the landscape in her beautiful, yet disquieting imagery.

Inspired by the 19th-century American landscape conventions, which often presented romanticized views of the American West, McPhee questions the promises made in these mythical images of beauty, abundance, and prosperity. Her photograph, *Understory Flareups, Fourth of July Creek, Valley Road Wildfire*, reveals the aftermath of a forest fire in Custer County, Idaho. Fire has rampaged over the natural habitat as fallen trees lay amidst the still-smoldering brush. Gaps in the canopy allow sunbeams to stream through the smoky atmosphere and dramatically illuminate the scene.

While the image distinctly lacks figures, human impact is clearly present. Increased wildfires are linked to human-driven climate change



with the highest risk for fires centered in wildland urban interface areas where development and wilderness meet. Warmer, drier conditions, increased drought, and human impact have resulted in longer and more destructive fire seasons that are dramatically reshaping the Northwest landscape and will have an effect for years to come.

## Mark Abrahamson

(b. 1944, Seattle, WA)

***Cul de sac (Watershed  
Investigations III Series/  
The Snohomish River)***, 1994

Cibachrome

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection  
Gift of Mark Abrahamson*



Washington-based artist Mark Abrahamson creates aerial photographs that depict abstract patterns found in the landscape. Focusing on urban and rural environments, Abrahamson investigates how human development has altered the landscape, especially natural watershed areas and their relationship to climate change.

An environmental advocate, Abrahamson describes works such as *Cul de Sac*

*(Watershed Investigation)* as “narrative abstractions.” Using an aerial perspective, he offers an alternative viewpoint of the land—one redefined by the forces of nature and development. In somber, cool tones and soft, geometric forms, the artist presents a deceptively beautiful image. However, upon closer inspection, *Cul de Sac (Watershed Investigation)* reveals the consequences of imprudent development. Evidence of dramatic soil erosion is apparent in a waterfall-like form at the photograph’s center. Beyond mere displacement of soil, erosion such as this leads to increased pollution and sedimentation of waterways and wetlands—resulting in some of the historic declines of native species impacted by urban development.

**Eirik Johnson**

(b. 1974, Seattle, WA)

***Freshly Felled Trees,  
Nemah, Washington, 2007***

Archival pigment print



*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection  
Purchased with funds donated by Gary Bettis*

## Ansel Adams

(1902 - 1984, b. San Francisco, CA, d. Monterey, CA)



### ***Tree, Stump, and Mist, Northern Cascades, Washington, 1958***

Gelatin silver print

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*

*Collectors Forum Purchase, 2009*

Ansel Adams is considered one of the most important and influential landscape photographers of the 20th century. His dramatic black-and-white imagery capture the grandeur and sublime beauty of the American West, especially areas of remote or untouched wilderness.

An accomplished artist and technician, Adams is best known for his “straight” photography—

characterized by the image's sharp focus, deep tones, and dramatic contrast. While truthful representations of his environs, these photographs equally convey a sense of drama and emotional connection to the land.

Revealing the truth and beauty of his environment, Adams believed his landscape photographs had the power to move viewers to action. The artist was an outspoken leader of the conservation movement, during which he, along with others, sought to preserve the shrinking areas of wilderness for future generations. Located three hours from Seattle, Tree, Stump, and Mist, Northern Cascades, Washington was taken ten years before the Northern Cascades was established as a part of the National Park Service. The beauty of this preserved wilderness is captured in the landscape's jagged peaks, forested valleys, waterfalls, and glaciers.

**Richard Young**

(b. 1953, Boise, ID)

***Point of Origin***, 1986

Oil on canvas



*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*

*Gift of the Artist*

# James T. Mattingly

(1934 - 2006, b. Southgate, CA, d. Salem, OR)

top

***Land Sale; Lots 447 & 448, 1971***

Collagraph, edition 11/15



bottom

***Land Sale; Four Box Lot, 1971***

Collagraph, edition 2/25



*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection  
Gift of the Mattingly Family*



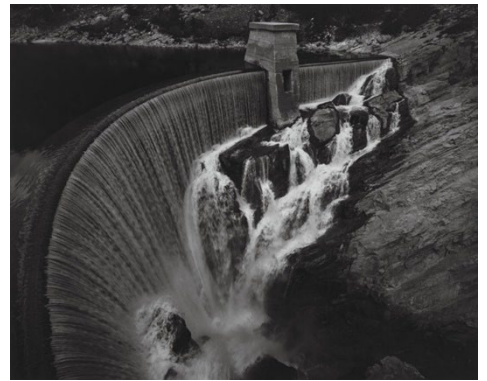
## **Toshio Shibata**

(b. 1949, Tokyo, Japan)

***Gibson Dam, Lewis and  
Clark County, Montana,  
1996***

Gelatin silver print

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection  
Collectors Forum Purchase, 1999*



Japanese photographer Toshio Shibata's sublime, highly detailed portraits of public-works projects capture the dichotomous relationship between human infrastructure and the natural landscape. With an objective viewpoint, Shibata highlights the visual harmony and massive scale of places where human development and nature intersect. In 1996, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago commissioned Shibata (who had spent more than a decade photographing

public-works projects in his native Japan) to create his signature, black-and-white images of the American landscape, including the Northwest.

In *Gibson Dam, Lewis and Clark County, Montana*, Shibata removes the horizon line from the scene and focuses closely on the dam and surrounding landscape. The artist directs the viewer's eye to the movement of water over and around the immense, unnatural structure. Dividing the image into two contrasting views of the land, using the geometric arc of the 200-foot dam's rim, he contrasts the symmetry of the dam's water overflow against a bursting waterfall cascading over clusters of boulders. The resulting photograph creates both an aesthetic and philosophical counterpoint between two views of the land and its most critical resource—water.

Before Gibson Dam was built at its current location on the Sun River, the waters were known as Medicine River to the Indigenous Blackfeet Nation, who used the river to irrigate their crops. In 1865, the U.S Reclamation Service began surveying the area as a means of increasing population growth and white settlement in the valley. Constructed in the late 1920s, the Gibson Dam was built to aid this growth and summer crop irrigation, serving as a structure of displacement for natural resources and Indigenous people of the area.

## John Feodorov

(b.1960, Los Angeles, CA, active Bellingham, WA) Navajo

### ***Vanitas #4 CSP 11-102***, 2011

Lithograph

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*



John Feodorov is a multi-disciplinary artist known for music, performance, and visual art. Drawing upon his mixed Navajo and European American heritage, he experiments with visual symbols to create hybrid mythical iconographies that investigate ideas of spirituality, identity, and place. In 2001, Crow Shadow Institute, located on the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Oregon, hosted Feodorov for a ten-day residency during which he created his lithograph series, *Vanitas*. In this series of four prints, the artist weaves together Indigenous

symbols, traditional art motifs, and cultural icons to form a cautionary tale of our relationship to the land and its resources.

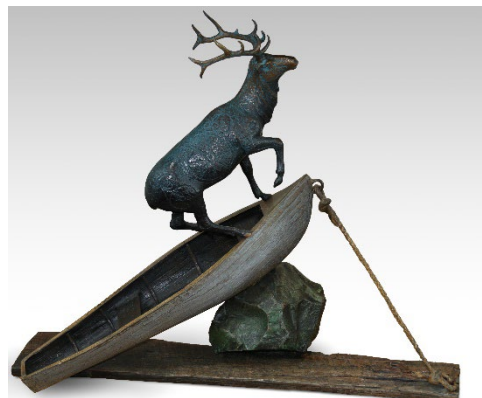
In European tradition, a *vanitas* image may contain a rotting fruit or skull to symbolize the inevitability of death and the transience of earthly pleasures. For Navajo and many Southwest Indigenous cultures, the rattlesnake embodies ideas of ill health or death. *Vanitas #4* is reminiscent of traditional Navajo weaving with its muted color and balanced composition. Each print in the *Vanitas* series includes the same collection of objects: fuel pump, broken vehicle part, double x, and black rattlesnake. The spare imagery embodies a powerful message as Feodorov cautions us to reconsider the harmful costs of our earthly desires—to both our environment and ourselves.

## Brad Rude

(b. 1964, Montana,  
active Walla Walla, WA)

*Untitled*, 1995

Bronze



*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*

*Gift of Pat and Dan Nelson*

## John Grade

(b. 1970, Minneapolis, MN,  
active Seattle, WA)

### ***Caudex (vertical)***, 2004

Bamboo wood, resin

*Boise Art Museum Permanent  
Collection*

*Collectors Forum Purchase, 2005*



Seattle artist John Grade studies anthropology and natural history and examines the phenomena of the human condition. He embraces notions about cycles of life and the physical transitions that take place in death. Examining the architecture of structures and natural forms, he considers their physical properties in relation to the art of creating sculpture. The artist's early works began with introducing insects to wood placed in a closed container and allowing the insects to eat away

at its surfaces and interiors. He later buried large artworks in outdoor locations to achieve his desired effect. Grade allowed the natural habits of the insects to develop the elemental patterns in the wood. In his unusual approach, he elaborated on the process by manipulating and carving the wood to guide the shapes into elegant forms. Grade now employs a variety of methods from mold-making to constructed assemblies of various hand-made components. His sculptures hang from the ceiling, cantilever off walls, or rise from the floor. As in nature, his shapes come in an endless variety and can be simple or complex.



## **William Lewis**

(b. 1966, Sacramento, CA,  
active Boise, ID)

***The Next Morning***  
***(the Burn Pile series)***, 2010  
Oil on canvas

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*  
*Gift of Anita Kay Hardy and Gregory Kaslo*



## A Land of Oppositions

In *Myths, Fables, and Fortunes*, artists examine visually and ideologically the Northwest's traditional, resource-based economy in contrast with explosive residential development. Historically, attitudes and policies regarding our environment have been complex, even contradictory, as we balance opposing ideas of how we utilize, conserve, and manage our environment. Natural resources, including the Northwest's water, forest, and arable land, have been significantly strained by a changing climate and historic population growth, especially in our urban centers. Entangled in these narratives are the diverse histories, industries, and communities who share the land.

## Ron Jude

(b. 1965, Covina, CA, active Eugene, OR)

left

***Mountain Cabin, Lick Creek  
Road, McCall, Idaho, 1997***

Chromogenic development print



right

***Fresh Asphalt, Near McCall,  
Idaho, 1996***

Chromogenic development print



*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*

Ron Jude's photographs often explore the intersection of memory, place, and social observation. Raised in rural Idaho, Jude revisited his childhood home of McCall, Idaho, to examine how this small town had been

transformed from a rural, mountain community to a popular resort destination.

*Fresh Asphalt* and *Mountain Cabin* are two of thirty-seven large, color photographs from Jude's *45th Parallel* project, depicting McCall, Idaho, between 1994 and 1998. Characterized by their bold color, direct presentation, and tightly cropped compositions, Jude's seemingly mundane photographs encompass larger themes of identity, preservation, and progress. *45th Parallel* is not only McCall's latitudinal location (halfway between the equator and North Pole) but a metaphor for a critical juncture in the town's identity. Situated on scenic Payette Lake in central Idaho, McCall—like so many other small Northwest communities—has struggled to protect its traditional way of life amidst changing economies and environmental practices.

The stacked logs and weathered façade of *Mountain Cabin* recall McCall's former identity as a lumber town and its connection to the land as a vital resource and economic driver. In *Fresh Asphalt*, the black tar of new pavement mimics a scenic lake as it signifies the encroaching development on wilderness brought on by a tourism-based economy. As some seek to preserve the cultural traditions of this small, lumber town as it is being engulfed and commodified by economic progress, others are convinced McCall's transformation to an exclusive resort community is essential for its survival.

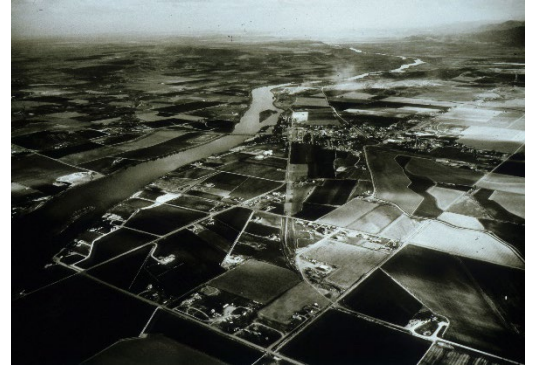
**Lori Dagley**

(b. 1971, Boise, ID)

***Farms on the Snake River,  
Southern Idaho, March  
24th, 2004***

Gelatin silver print

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*



## **James Pringle Cook**

(b. 1947, Topeka, KS,  
active Tucson, AZ)



### ***Windfalls – Old Fire Site*, 1988**

Oil on canvas

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*  
*Gift of Mr. and Mrs. William A. Small, Jr.*

Based in Tucson, Arizona, James Cook is best known for his expressive, monumental landscapes that feature vigorous brushwork and thick impasto surfaces. His landscapes are as much about the act of painting as they are about keen observation and naturalism. Cook's creative process begins with journeying into the landscape.

After selecting a location, he produces a series of plein air sketches, often in oil. Returning to the studio, he creates additional drawings

and studies, based on his memory and experience of the place, that serve as the inspiration for larger paintings. While Cook has explored a wide range of subjects and locales during his career, he often returns to the commanding beauty of Idaho's Sawtooth Mountains and Wood River Valley. In *Windfalls – Old Fire Site*, the artist captures a moment in the forest's natural cycle that is poised between fire and regrowth. In this painting, Cook elevates a scene of seeming desolation to a vision of inspiring splendor.



## Gallery 9

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### **Jonathon Hexner**

(b. 1968, Dhaka, Bangladesh,  
active New York, NY)

#### ***Buck #41***, 2010

Exploded gunpowder on rag paper



*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection  
Collectors Forum Purchase, 2013*

## Abstraction and Spirituality

Moving beyond traditional depictions of the land, many artists featured in *Myths, Fables, and Fortunes* utilize abstraction to convey a more subjective, often spiritual view of nature. By emphasizing color, form, line, and gesture over representation, artists exceed the limits of realism to create imagery that expresses intangible and experiential aspects of their surroundings.

Other artists explore their spiritual relationship with the land through animal imagery. Whether domesticated or wild, animals are not only co-inhabitants but also powerful symbols of our cultural and spiritual connection with our environment. Through their varied approaches, these artists explore humanity's interconnectedness with nature.

**Thomas Finnegan**

(b. 1977, Boise, ID)

***Taraxacum Tormentum*, 2013**

Aluminum



*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*

*Purchased with funds donated by Lois Lenzi*

## Frank Boyden

(b. 1942, Portland, OR)

***Heron Vase #103***, late 20th  
century

Glazed stoneware



*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*

## Kerry Moosman

(b. 1951, Atlanta, ID)

***Vessel***, 1983

Incised stoneware with iridescent  
glaze



*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*  
*Gift of Clark and Sydney Fidler*

## Ramon Murillo

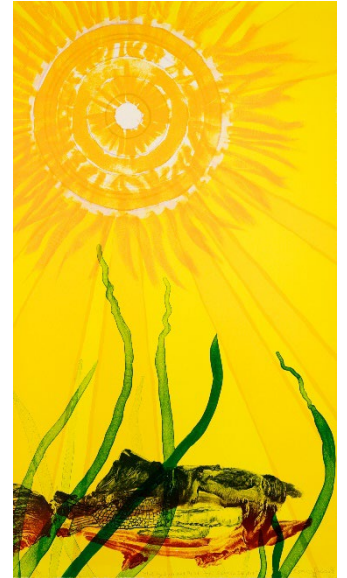
(b. Pocatello, Idaho,  
active Bellingham, WA)  
Shoshone-Bannock

### ***Blazing Sun and Protector Salmon Spirit, 2005***

Color lithograph

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*

*Purchased with funds donated by Yvonne  
McCoy in honor of the BAM Docent Program*



Ramon Murillo draws upon his Mexican-American and Shoshone-Bannock identity in the creation of his work, which spans between traditional drum making to lithography, painting, and mixed media. Murillo considers himself a conduit between the Indigenous and western world, and emphasizes the importance of spirituality within his creative practice. Murillo's imagery often demonstrates

the ways animals and supernatural beings serve as mediators between the natural and spiritual realms.

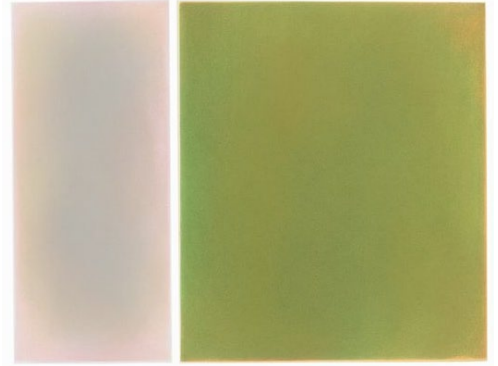
In *Blazing Sun and Protector Spirit*, Murillo refers to a vision he experienced while participating in the Shoshone *Daquteyi We Ne*, or “standing thirsty for a vision” ceremony. For four days and nights, the artist went without food or water. On the third day of dancing, a spirit helper *Gai I Muga*, or “salmon spirit,” appeared to Murillo and instructed him to cover himself in cattail reeds to protect himself from the heat of the hundred-degree day.

For the Shoshone-Bannock people, salmon is not only a potent spirit symbol, but also a once-bountiful resource for food and trade. However, this native fish has drastically declined due to dams placed on the Snake River in the 60s and 70s, with estimates of

only 2% of its historical population remaining. The Shoshone-Bannock have worked closely with conservation groups and legislators to advocate for removing dams and restoring the lower Snake River so that the salmon may survive.

## Anne Appleby

(b. 1954, Harrisburg, PA)



***Winter***, 1999

Aquatint

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*

*Gift of Greg Kucera and Larry Yocom in Honor of Michael and Driek Zirinsky*

Anne Appleby creates abstract paintings inspired by Montana's rural landscape, where she has lived and worked for nearly 40 years. Appleby's compositions capture the subtle shifts of the natural world and include simple arrangements of panels defined by their luminous color gradations. The artist practices an almost meditative observation of color—a technique she attributes to her studies with an Ojibwe elder—built upon hours of observation and noticing the slightest changes of hue and light.



Pairing keen observation with her intimate relationship with nature, Appleby seeks to capture the essence of the landscape and its beauty. She is drawn to the transition and impermanence of nature, whether the quality of light or its' changing seasons. In *Winter*, Appleby pairs two fields of color to convey the delicate shifts in tone that evoke winter snow or evergreen trees. *Winter* embodies Appleby's reverence for the sublime beauty of the landscape, while encouraging us to more deeply examine our place within the natural world.

## **Carl Morris**

(1911-1993, b. Yorba Linda, CA,  
d. Seattle, WA)



***Silver Creek # 562***, 1988

Acrylic on canvas

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*

*Gift of the Carl and Hilda Morris Foundation*

## Marc Boone

(b. 1950, Palouse Country,  
Northern ID, active Ocean Park,  
WA)

### ***Forest Crown*, 1994**

Oil, wax, canvas

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*



Born and raised in the Palouse country of Northern Idaho and Eastern Washington, Marc Boone draws upon his memory of the landscape—its light, color, mood and weather—as a point of departure for his paintings. He describes his creative process as a search for the poetic and magical in nature. Rather than faithfully reproducing the landscape, Boone's luminous oil-and-wax paintings explore both the act of painting and nature's more metaphysical essence.

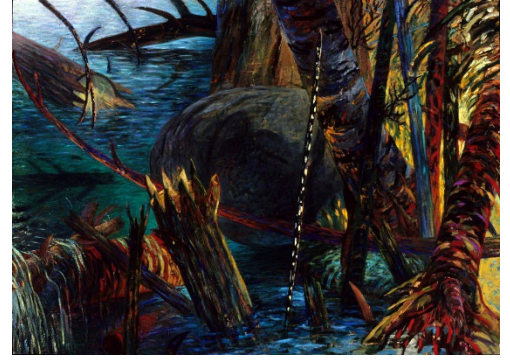
Highly abstracted, the subject of *Forest Crown* is at first difficult to discern. Boone layers hazy shades of magenta, blue, and yellow-pink, using thick layers of pigment and wax, to capture a transformative force of nature—the forest fire. Perched atop a hill, a stand of trees is ablaze from a crown fire—a fire that travels across the top of trees rather than along the forest floor. Crown fires occur during years of drought and are part of the forest’s natural lifecycle. Forests destroyed by crown fires rapidly re-seed afterward. However, the impact of climate change—manifested in the extraordinary heatwaves in the Pacific Northwest and prolonged periods of drought—has resulted in devastating fires, such as Oregon’s Bootleg fire, which as of late July 2021, had burned more than 400,000 acres of forest.

# Romey Stuckart

(1955 – 2020, Sublimity, OR)

***The Bone Yard***, 1989

Oil on canvas



*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection  
Collectors Forum Purchase, 1995*

## Deborah Butterfield

(b. 1949, Bozeman, MT)

***Democrat***, 1995

Sculpture/steel

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*

*Collectors Forum Purchase, 1997*



Butterfield is one of America's best-known female sculptors. She is internationally recognized for her life-size sculptures of horses, made from a variety of found objects, welded steel, or cast bronze. For more than 25 years, the artist has continually reinvented and rethought the figure of the horse, demonstrating her affectionate and energetic appreciation of these animals. In the 1980s, Butterfield began sculpting horses from found metal, retrieved from industrial salvage yards, wrecked cars, demolished buildings, and construction sites. She does not work from a

preparatory drawing. Instead, she prefers the immediacy of working directly with her materials. In works such as *Democrat*, the artist emphasizes the architectural structure, contour, and mass of the horse with the weighty and crumpled metal scraps used to create the powerful muscles in the horse's shoulders and rump. Butterfield also practices the art of dressage and directs a riding program for children with disabilities at the stable on her Montana ranch.

## Lucinda Parker

(b. 1942, Boston, MA)



### ***Ledge and Swamp,*** 2000

Acrylic on canvas

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*  
*Purchased with funds donated in part by*  
*Howard and Dottie Goldman*

As one of the premier painters of the Pacific Northwest, Lucinda Parker is known for her distinctive style of gestural abstraction. Her paintings are defined by their energetic and multi-layered depictions of her natural surroundings. An amateur naturalist, the artist often wanders the woods near her home observing the natural environment. Parker deftly combines keen observation of mountains, water, and forests, with the act of painting. Rarely using a brush, the artist



vigorously manipulates the acrylic paint with a spatula loaded with thick impastos of yellow, black, gray, and brown color. A synthesis of gesture and geometry, her compositions begin as lines, angles, and arcs before they merge into the familiar shapes found in nature. Often working wet-on-wet, Parker may drag one mass of color against another, or sometimes will scrape and carve the paint after it has dried.

Parker's *Ledge and Swamp* is striking for its large scale as well as the brilliant colors, sweeping motion, and structured, volumetric forms that characterize her work. Comprised of two panels, this composition is dramatically bisected by a section of the tree's trunk and a jutting limb. Parker creates a dramatic sense of space by contrasting the dark hues of the tree in the foreground with the vibrant bands and flowing arcs of color of the swampy forest

interior. The dynamic angles of *Ledge and Swamp* convey the land as wild and untamed—more as a mythical archetype than of physical reality.

## Katy Stone

(b. 1969, Rockford, IL)

### ***Red Willow Fall***, 2004-2005

Acrylic on mylar

*Boise Art Museum Permanent  
Collection*

*Gift of Driek and Michael Zirinsky*



In her monumental, yet ephemeral sculptures, Katy Stone captures the interplay of light and shadow, the organic and artificial, as she is drawn to forms and processes of the natural world. Her large installations evoke natural phenomenon or memories of the land, paused in a moment of transformation. To mirror the visual language of organic forms, Stone works in a wide variety of synthetic materials, often employing aluminum, Plexiglas, or Dura-Lar, an archival acetate.

In 2004, Stone was invited to the Boise Art Museum to create a site-specific installation, which included several works, such as *Red Willow Fall*. These works were inspired by the visual and symbolic poetry of a single word—*fall*—a recurring theme in the artist's work at that time. *Red Willow Fall* appears to cascade to the ground in a stream of shimmering red as it mimics the exhalation of a weeping willow, with its multiplicity of hand-cut and individually painted shapes. *Red Willow Fall* conveys a sense of natural harmony, encouraging a meditation on the boundaries between our man-made and natural environments. Poised between resilience and fragility—*Red Willow Fall* suggests that, at any moment, a strong breeze could dissipate the willow's fragile presence and leave only a recollection of its existence.

## George Tsutakawa

(1920 - 1997, Seattle, WA)



### ***Reflection***, 1959

Sumi ink on paper on board

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*

*Collectors Forum Purchase, 2011*

George Tsutakawa was a highly regarded painter and sculptor best known for his avant-garde bronze fountain designs and his association with the Northwest School. Raised in both the United States and Japan, he showed an early interest in art and eventually became a professor at the University of Washington's School of Art.

At the urging of his friend, fellow Northwest School artist Mark Tobey, Tsutakawa began to explore his cultural roots through his art-making practice. He was especially interested

in capturing rhythms and cycles of nature, often depicting the life force of plants, trees, or water in flowing lines. *Reflection* was created in the Sumi-e style (a traditional Japanese method of brush painting using black ink on white paper) which the artist learned as a child. For Tsutakawa, the abstracted ripples of water represent a harmonious force that connects man and nature.

## Northwest School

In the late 1930s and 1940s, a group of artists, working in Seattle, shared a similar interest in combining natural elements of the Pacific Northwest with traditional Asian aesthetics, to create a distinct regional style. The four leading artists of this group—Mark Tobey, Morris Graves, Kenneth Callahan, and Guy Anderson—came to national attention when, in 1953, *Life* magazine published a feature article, “Mystic Painters of the Northwest.”

This group of artists shared a similar emphasis on dark, tonal colors, atmospheric lighting, and the natural environment of the Pacific Northwest. Many artists followed Eastern religion and Buddhist ideas, and focused on a more spiritual and symbolic depiction of nature. Other important artists associated with the Northwest School include Carl and Hilda Morris, George Tsutakawa, Doris Chase, and Jay Steensma.

## **Kenneth Callahan**

(1906-1986, b. Spokane, WA, d. Seattle, WA)



### ***Multitudes on the Mountain*, 1968**

Tempera and oil on gesso board

*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*  
*Gift of Wells Fargo*

## **Morris Graves**

(1910-2001, b. Fox Valley, OR, d. Loleta, CA)

### ***Wolf Eagle*, 1957**

Ink on paper



*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*  
*Gift of Lyle and Carol Kradolfer*



## **Theodore Waddell**

(b. 1941, Billings, MT)

***Horses and Blackbird*, 1989**

Oil on canvas



*Boise Art Museum Permanent Collection*  
*Gift of Steve and Susan Mann*