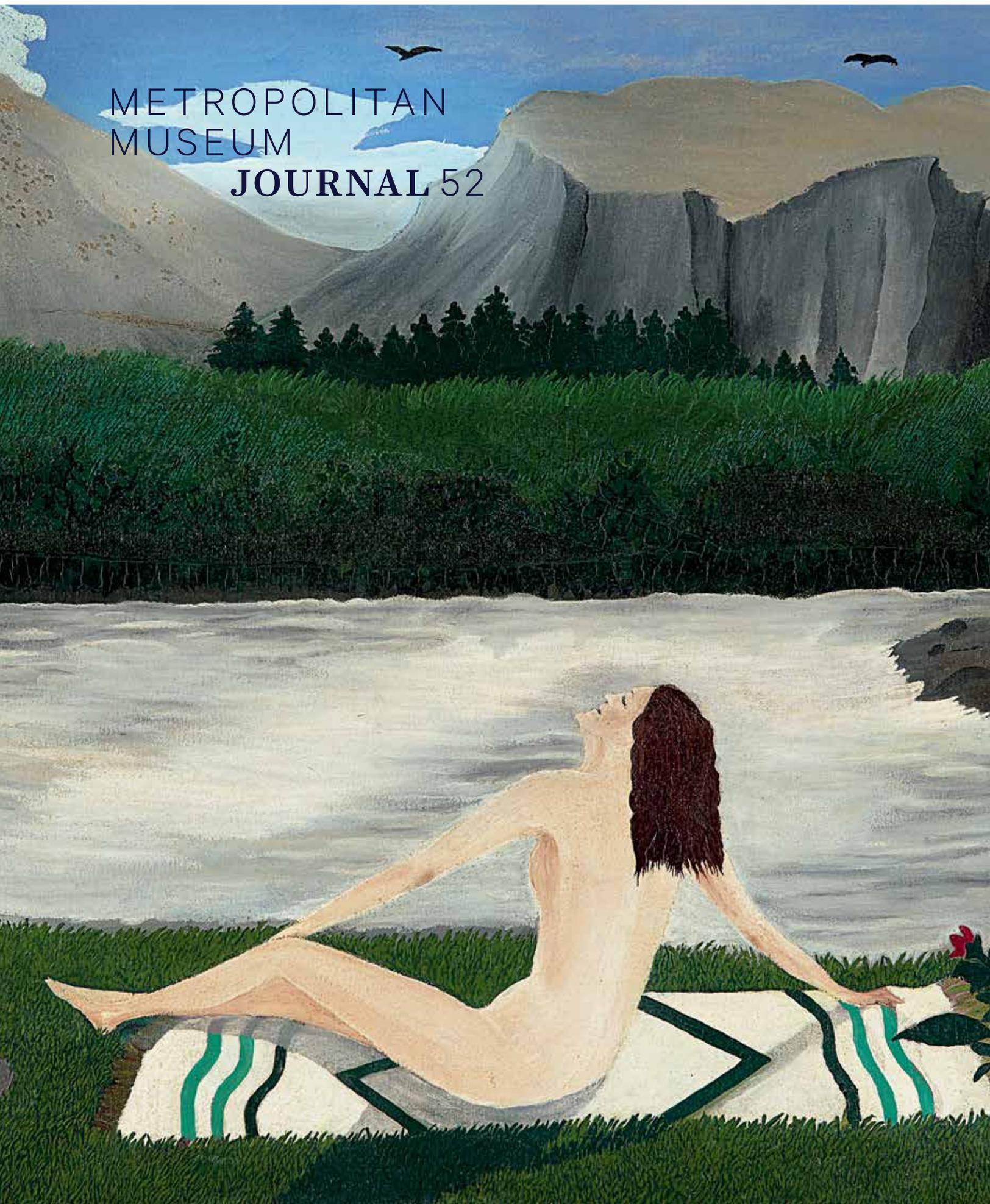
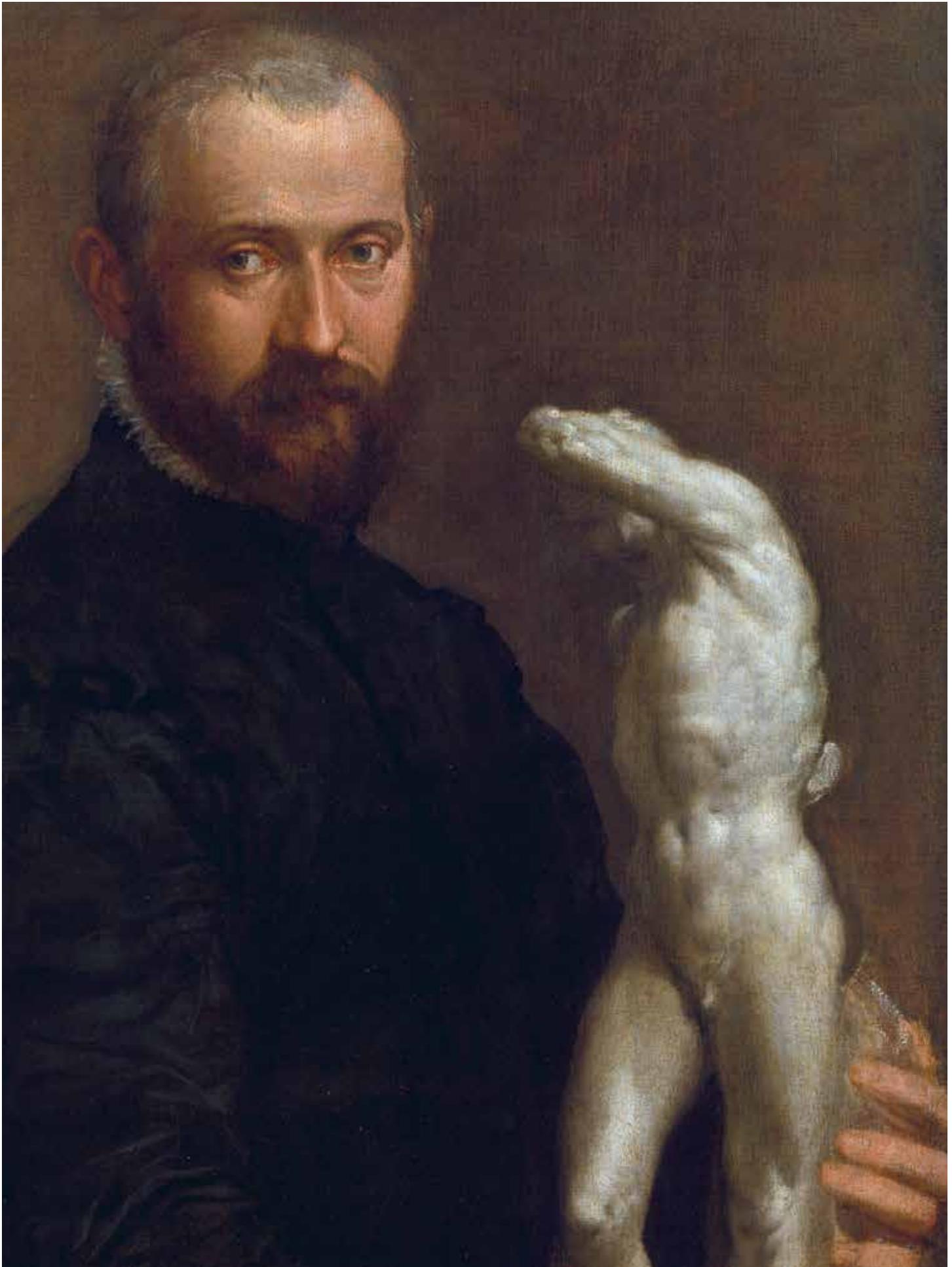


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Front and back cover illustration: Horace Pippin (American, 1888–1946). Detail of *The Lady of the Lake*, ca. 1936–39. See fig. 2, p. 97.

Illustration on p. 2: Paolo Veronese (Italian, 1528–1588). Detail of *Alessandro Vittoria*, ca. 1575. See fig. 1, p. 116.

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## MANUSCRIPT GUIDELINES FOR THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM JOURNAL

The *Metropolitan Museum Journal* is issued annually by The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Its purpose is to publish original research on works of art in the Museum's collection. Authors include members of the Museum staff and other art historians, conservators, scientists, and specialists.

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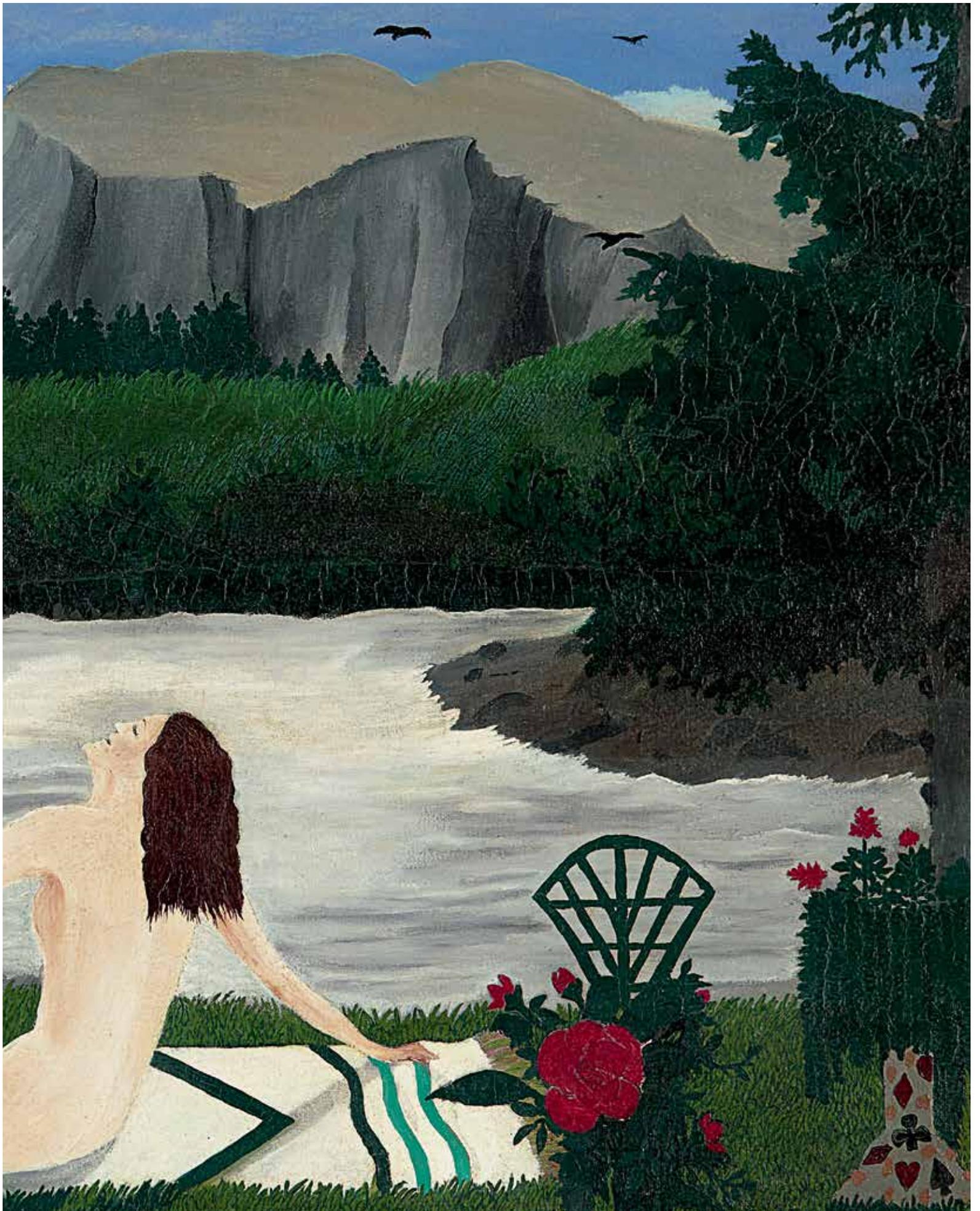
### ABBREVIATIONS

MMA The Metropolitan Museum of Art  
MMAB The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin  
MMJ Metropolitan Museum Journal

*Height precedes width and then depth in dimensions cited.*

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**JOURNAL** 52



**ANNE MONAHAN  
ISABELLE DUVERNOIS  
SILVIA A. CENTENO**

“Working My Thought More  
Perfectly”: Horace Pippin’s  
*The Lady of the Lake*

The first monograph devoted to an African American artist was Selden Rodman’s *Horace Pippin: A Negro Painter in America*, published in 1947.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps even more surprising than its lateness is its subject: a self-taught painter from West Chester, Pennsylvania, whose meteoric public career lasted only nine years. Horace Pippin (1888–1946) made his debut in a local art show in 1937, less than a decade after he had started painting, and was soon attracting curators, collectors, critics, and dealers across the country with his depictions of World War I, in which he had been grievously wounded; daily life in and beyond rural Pennsylvania; nature, often domesticated in still lifes and gardens; and heroes of various stripes, including Jesus Christ, John Brown, Abraham Lincoln, Marian Anderson, and Major General Smedley Butler.<sup>2</sup> By the time of his unexpected death, he had more than seventy-five national and international exhibitions to his



fig. 1 Reverse of Horace Pippin (American, 1888–1946). *The Lady of the Lake*, ca. 1936–39. Oil on canvas, 20½ × 36 in. (52.1 × 91.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Jane Kendall Gingrich, 1982 (1982.55.1) (fig. 2)

credit, including solo shows in West Chester (1937), Philadelphia (1940, 1941), New York (1940, 1944), Chicago (1941), and San Francisco (1942); the monograph under way; and gallery representation in Philadelphia, New York, and Los Angeles. This attention was part of an interwar fascination with autodidacts, mostly European Americans, who were championed for fusing abstract form and homey subjects.<sup>3</sup> The combination was seen as a gateway to modernism for viewers wary of avant-garde styles and politics, and the artists' life stories resonated with the democratic populism widespread during the Great Depression.

Owing to Pippin's laborious technique and abbreviated career, his oeuvre comprises fewer than 140 burnt-wood panels, paintings, and drawings, which can be divided into those produced before and after 1937, when exhibition and sales records begin.<sup>4</sup> The Metropolitan Museum of Art owns nine works of art by Pippin, having purchased the painting *Victorian Interior II* (1945, 58.26) from Rodman in 1958 and received the rest in a bequest of 1982 from Jane Kendall Gingrich, who had begun assembling her collection in 1943. Then known as Mrs. John D. M. Hamilton and a fixture of the society pages, Gingrich lived near Pippin in Chester

County, entertained him at her impressive home, and acquired his paintings *Asleep* (1943, 1982.55.3), *Self-Portrait II* (1944, 1982.55.7), and *Victorian Interior I* (1945, 1982.55.5) during his lifetime. The group includes one of the African American family scenes for which he is celebrated and one of the floral still lifes, sometimes in elaborate interiors, which he increasingly produced for a voracious market. Pippin also gave Gingrich *The Den* (1945, collection of halley k. harrisburg and Michael Rosenfeld, New York), which she omitted from the bequest. After the artist's death, Gingrich, perhaps inspired by her own art making and patronage, assembled a parallel collection centered on his creative process.<sup>5</sup> That set includes the preparatory drawing *After Supper* (ca. 1935, 1982.55.8); the unfinished paintings *Family Supper* (1946, 1982.55.4), *Chairs* (1946, 1982.55.6), and *Holy Mountain IV* (1946, 1982.55.2); and the early composition *The Lady of the Lake* (ca. 1936–39, fig. 2), the initial elements of which can be seen on the reverse, where the paint soaked through the unprimed canvas (fig. 1). That original design is one of two thus far identified in Pippin's oeuvre; the other, *The Getaway* (1939, figs. 3, 4), was published by Rodman as a "preliminary study" and "sketch on the back of the Canvas."<sup>6</sup>

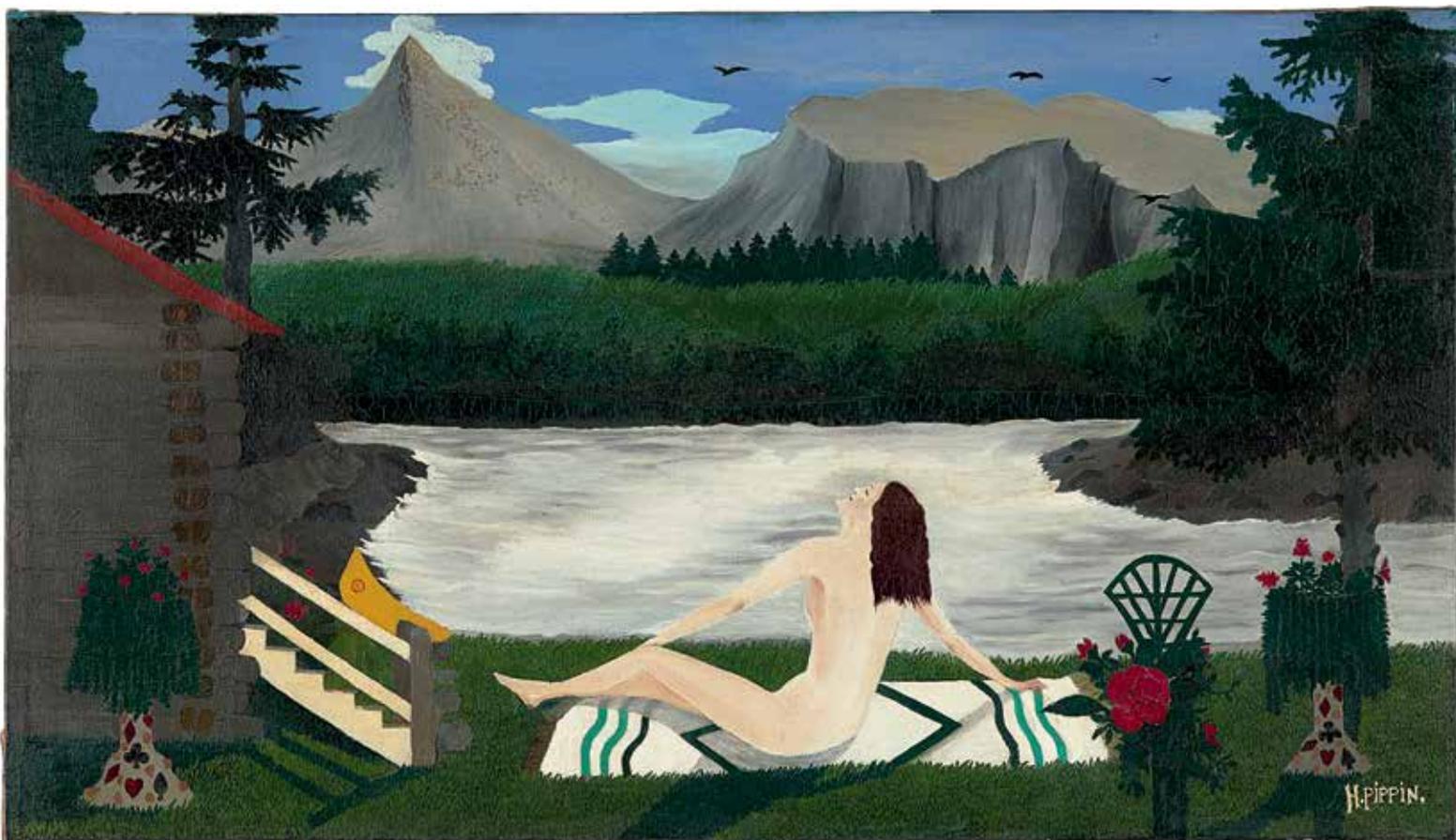


fig. 2 Horace Pippin (American, 1888–1946). *The Lady of the Lake*, ca. 1936–39. Oil on canvas, 20½ × 36 in. (52.1 × 91.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Jane Kendall Gingrich, 1982 (1982.55.1)

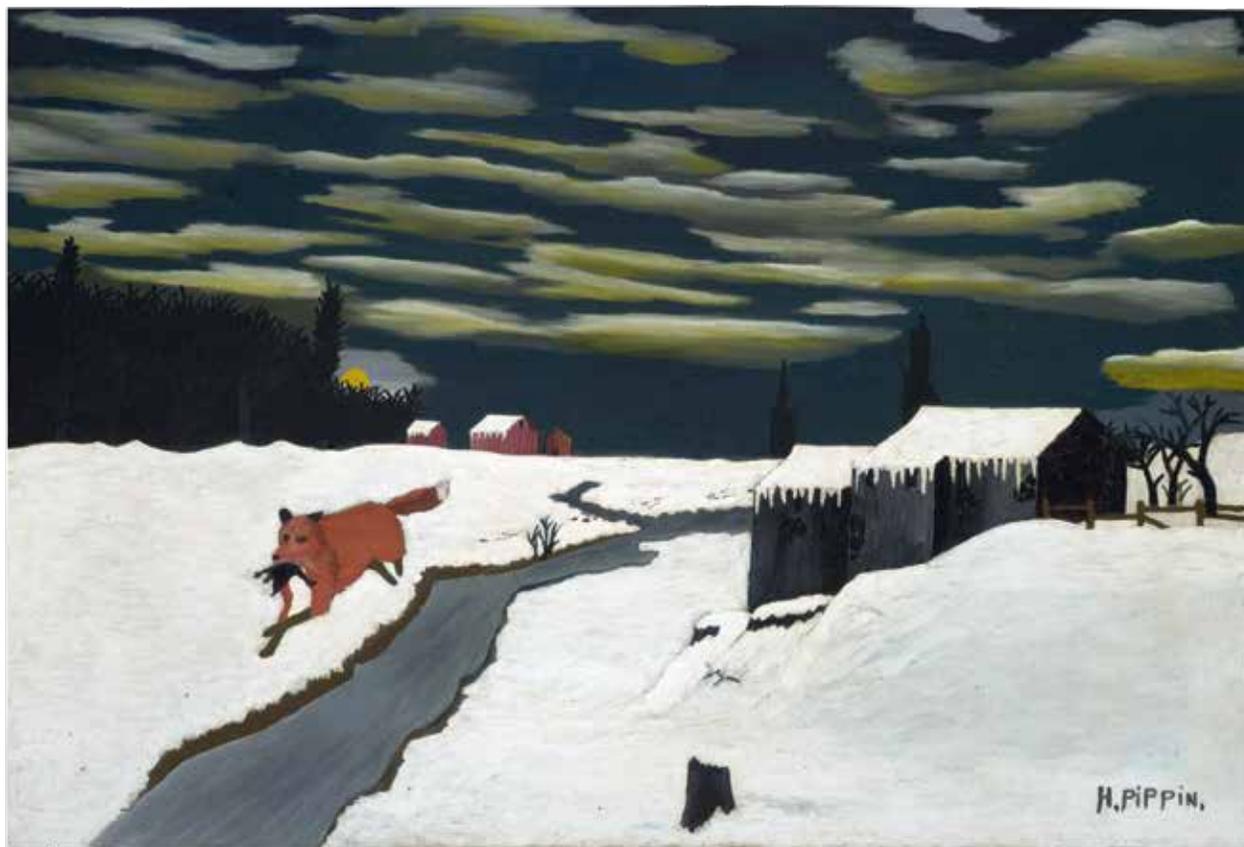
The reverse of *The Lady of the Lake* casts new light on an image that has long puzzled art historians.<sup>7</sup> The composition is an ambitious and fairly large one for Pippin, whose combat injury restricted his right arm’s range of motion. As his only nude, it depicts a lighter-skinned, brunette woman reclining on a patterned blanket in a quirky, waterside garden. A log cabin and canoe sit to the left, mountains fill the horizon, and long shadows indicate either early morning or late afternoon. Rodman surmised that the image had been “suggested if not copied direct from insurance calendars,” and Lynda Roscoe Hartigan and Jacqueline Francis have perceived a debt to the widely reproduced nudes in nature by Maxfield Parrish (1870–1966), but specific quotations have yet to be identified.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, Hartigan and Francis posit a connection to Walter Scott’s poem “The Lady of the Lake” (1810), set in sixteenth-century Scotland, and the silent film it inspired in 1928. The poem accords with the painting insofar as Scott’s titular heroine is a raven-haired beauty who boats on a lake and lives in a log house with a “rustic bower”; however, Pippin’s passive figure, curious plant stands, and vaguely Native American blanket and canoe are difficult to square with a narrative dedicated to a heroic Highland

lass.<sup>9</sup> As Francis notes, that discrepancy was not lost on the painting’s original audience, judging from an early review describing the canvas as “somehow more American Indian than Sir Walter Scottish in atmosphere and makeup.”<sup>10</sup> In 1942 the painting acquired the subtitle *The Sunbath*, confusing matters further.<sup>11</sup>

The position of *The Lady of the Lake* in Pippin’s chronology has also proved troublesome, as have the dates of much of his early work.<sup>12</sup> The catalogue for his 1941 solo show at the Arts Club of Chicago dates the painting to 1936, which Rodman later adopted in his monograph. A newly discovered checklist for Pippin’s 1942 exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Art dates the painting to 1939.<sup>13</sup> The artist’s dealer and agent, Robert Carlen, supplied the cataloguing data for both shows, and it is unclear if the later date is a correction or mistake. Those three years are significant. In 1936 Pippin was working in relative obscurity, showing and selling his art informally to friends and neighbors. By 1939 he had been cultivating relationships with local art mavens for a few years, and those friendships seem to have influenced his work.<sup>14</sup> Whatever Carlen’s intentions, the year 1939 better fits the painting’s exhibition history, which began in January 1940 with Pippin’s first

*fig. 3* Horace Pippin. *The Getaway*, 1939. Oil on canvas, 24 7/8 × 36 in. (62.5 × 91.4 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art, Bequest of Daniel W. Dietrich II (2016-3-3)

*fig. 4* Reverse of *The Getaway* (fig. 3)



solo show at Carlen's gallery in Philadelphia.<sup>15</sup> Were *The Lady of the Lake* ready in 1936, it might have turned up in one of the local shows in which Pippin took part in the late 1930s or among the works he shipped to the New York dealer Hudson Walker in 1939.<sup>16</sup>

*The Lady of the Lake* invites the kind of technical art history study—a combination of visual, scientific, and archival analyses—that is rarely accorded the work of self-taught artists. Building on Mark Bockrath and Barbara Buckley's pioneering 1993 survey of Pippin's materials and techniques, we shift the interpretative frame from Scott's poem to argue that *The Lady of the Lake* indexes Pippin's mounting ambition in the late 1930s, when he engaged and experimented with aesthetic conventions informing the art alongside which his own was increasingly exhibited. The resulting study opens the discursive horizon for *The Lady of the Lake* in particular and for Pippin's sometimes recondite imagery in general; challenges the primacy of texts, including his titles and oft-quoted statements, in interpretations of his art; and complicates assumptions about the relation of art's margin and mainstream for him and his peers.<sup>17</sup>

Pippin's statements began in earnest in 1938, when he introduced himself to a national audience via the exhibition and catalogue *Masters of Popular Painting: Modern Primitives of Europe and America* at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York. The show included four of his paintings, and Dorothy Miller's catalogue entry quoted at length from a statement he had supplied:

*How I Paint.* . . . The colors are very simple such as brown, amber, yellow, black, white, and green. The pictures which I have already painted come to me in my mind, and if to me it is a worth while [*sic*] picture, I paint it. I go over that picture in my mind several times and when I am ready to paint it I have all the details that I need. I take my time and examine every coat of paint carefully and to be sure that the exact color which I have in mind is satisfactory to me. Then I work my foreground from the background. That throws the background away from the foreground. In other words bringing out my work. The time it takes to make a picture depends on the nature of the picture. For instance the picture called *The Ending of the War, Starting Home* [*sic*] which was my first picture. On that picture I couldn't do what I really wanted to do, but my next pictures I am working my thought more perfectly. . . . To me it seems impossible for another to teach one of Art.<sup>18</sup>

In a 1941 interview, Pippin distilled that explanation as "pictures come to my mind." He continued,

"I think my pictures out with my brain and then I tell my heart to go ahead."<sup>19</sup> By 1944, critics like Rosamund Frost of *Art News* were relaying the message:

Pippin's style is simply the result of an inner vision of burning intensity. Lack of teaching has less to do with it than a determination to come as close to that vision as possible.

To attain this end Pippin will take unlimited pains, firmly convinced that he is copying the world exactly as it is. When an ultra-sensitive sense of tone and placement tell him that an object or a color doesn't "set" in the picture, he paints it over, building up the pigment to the thickness of impasto—a kind of triumph of the trial and error system.<sup>20</sup>

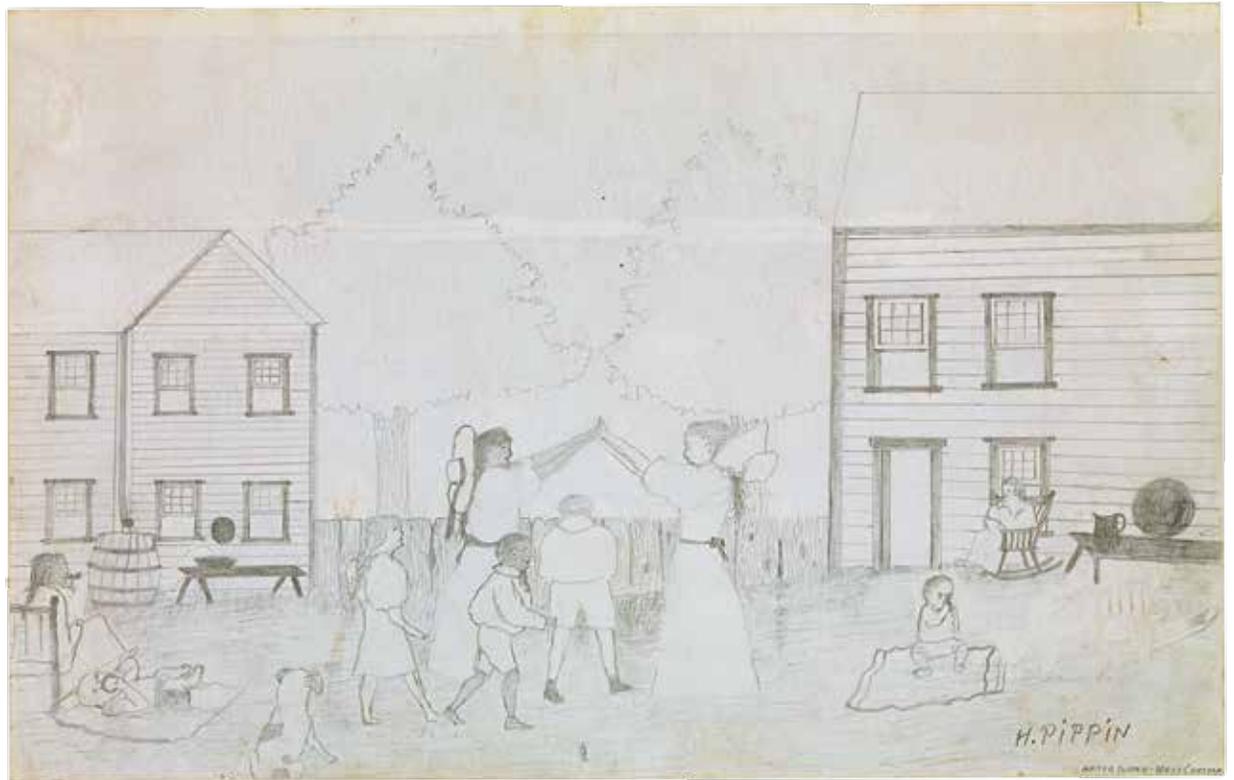
His fellow painters later recalled conversations that emphasized this realism. Romare Bearden remembered, "what impressed me most though was . . . especially how positive he was that his paintings were completely realistic."<sup>21</sup> Edward Loper reported, "He said, 'Ed, you know why I'm great? . . . Because I paint things exactly the way they are. . . . I don't do what these white guys do. I don't go around here making up a whole lot of stuff. I paint it exactly the way it is and exactly the way I see it.'"<sup>22</sup>

Coupled with long-standing preconceptions about autodidacts' guileless transparency, such comments have engendered a sense of Pippin's work as an unmediated transcription of a fully realized vision, be it imagined or observed, and one that is immune to the influence of the academic tradition. That impression has been reinforced by the rarity of preparatory studies like *After Supper* (fig. 5) and affirmed in the titles of his retrospectives: "Horace Pippin: The Way I See It," at the Brandywine River Museum of Art, Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania (2015), and "I Tell My Heart: The Art of Horace Pippin," which finished its national tour at the Metropolitan Museum (1995).<sup>23</sup> By demonstrating how comprehensively Pippin reconceptualized his work in progress—changes that go far beyond just replacing an object or color—*The Lady of the Lake*, like *The Getaway*, evinces a gap between his rhetoric and practice that makes space for new perspectives on his project.

*The Lady of the Lake* evolved from a composition that analogizes woman to nature in an organic arrangement of extended horizontals and sweeping curves to one that domesticates woman *and* nature in a more symmetrical, static, and staged design. On the verso the black-haired nude reclines at twilight on a bare, brown shore, silhouetted against dark blue water that reflects

*fig. 5* Horace Pippin. *After Supper*, ca. 1935. Graphite on cardboard, 14 × 22½ in. (35.6 × 56.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Jane Kendall Gingrich, 1982 (1982.55.8)

*fig. 6* Horace Pippin. *After Supper*, ca. 1935. Oil on fabric, 19 × 23½ in. (48.3 × 59.7 cm). Collection of Leon Hecht and Robert Pincus-Witten, New York



a dark blue sky, with rolling green hills in the distance. On the recto every element but the nude's body is transformed, along with the image's implicit narrative. The same figure, now in broad daylight, acquires trappings of civilization that include a cabin, canoe, blanket, lawn, garden, and a modern hairstyle in a lighter color. The lighter sky, sparkling white water, and shadows cast across the foreground are in keeping with the new time of day. The far shoreline disappears under a higher waterline, the hills grow into stark mountains, and tall evergreens frame the composition like a proscenium.

The final painting's bright palette, especially its red punctuations, marks another departure from the initial version and Pippin's work to date, which Rodman noted "had not yet used color with any more ambitious intent than to pick out the tongue of a buffalo, a wound, or a rusty leaf."<sup>24</sup> The revisions for *The Getaway* are fewer but similarly significant, as they shift the painting's tone and narrative from static to dynamic: the standing gray canid (a wolf? dog? fox?) morphs into a red fox making off with a crow in its mouth, as the red barn fades to dark gray.<sup>25</sup> The pair of paintings makes plain that Pippin was, at least occasionally, less interested in realizing preconceived compositions than in experimenting

with imagery, themes, narratives, and solutions at the easel. The drawing for *After Supper* (fig. 5) does likewise in its erasures (which do not register in reproduction) and distance from the finished painting.

To understand how Pippin developed and altered his picture, we examined it in normal and raking light and in comparison with his other work of the 1930s and with X-radiography, infrared reflectography (IRR), X-ray fluorescence (XRF) imaging, and Raman spectroscopy.<sup>26</sup> He painted *The Lady of the Lake* on a medium-weight, two-over-one basket-weave cotton canvas.<sup>27</sup> Bockrath and Buckley identified a similar support in four paintings; in at least three, including *The Lady of the Lake*, the canvas was not primed with a ground layer.<sup>28</sup> Of those, only *The Lady of the Lake* has retained its original strainer, which does not appear to be a commercial product. It is made of spruce wood and crudely constructed, with four unusually thick and rough-cut wood members devoid of beveled edges and butt-jointed with plain joint fasteners. The artist could have made the strainer with available, local wood.<sup>29</sup> It is unclear how often Pippin made his own strainers because most of his early paintings have been restretched for conservation purposes. By 1940,

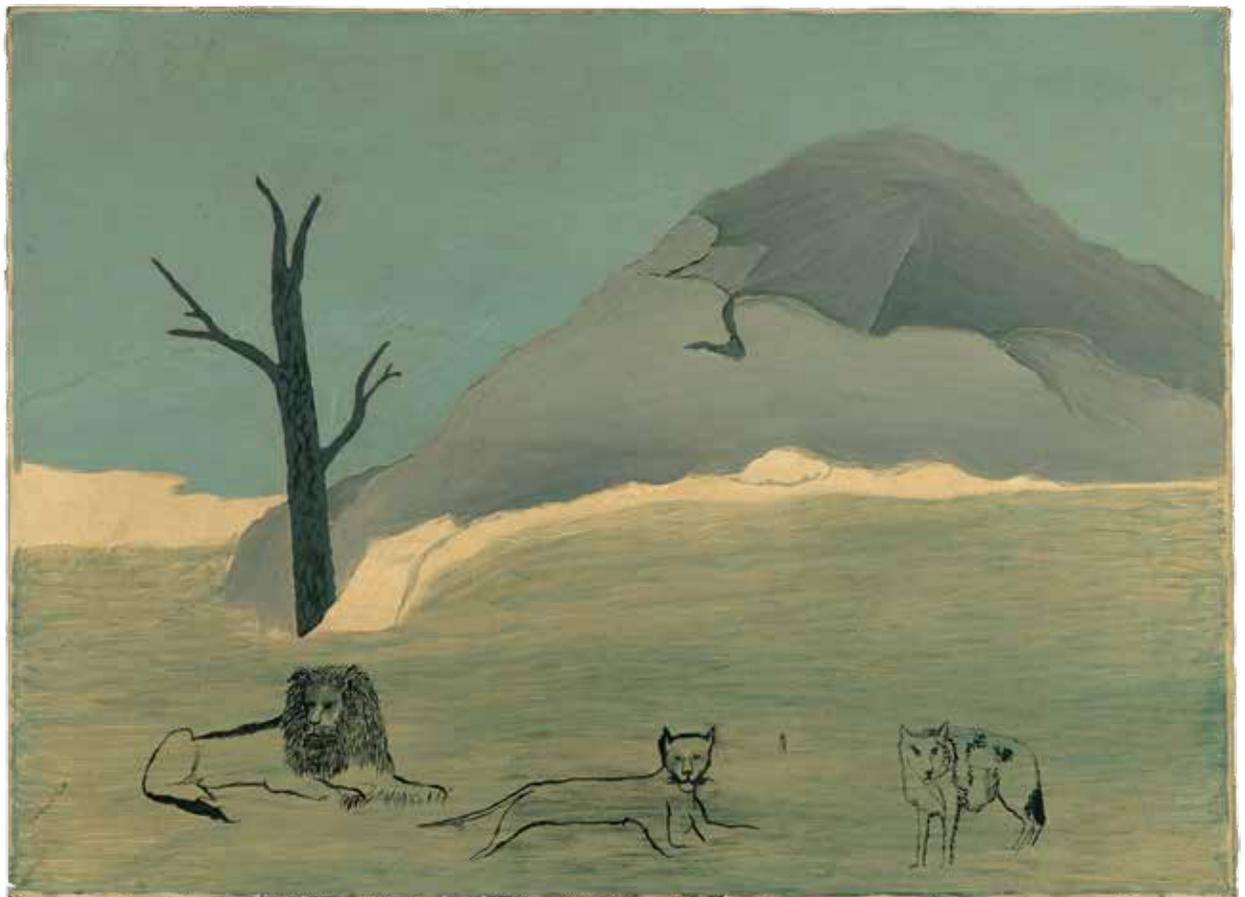


fig. 7 Horace Pippin. *Holy Mountain IV*, 1946. Oil on canvas, 26 × 36 in. (66 × 91.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Jane Kendall Gingrich, 1982 (1982.55.2)

fig. 8 X-radiograph of *The Lady of the Lake* (fig. 2). The presence of the stretcher is digitally reduced for clarity.



he had switched to commercial stretchers, canvases, and canvas boards.

Pippin typically started a painting by outlining, first in pencil, then black paint, a technique also seen in unfinished canvases in the Gingrich bequest such as *Holy Mountain IV* (fig. 7). Infrared examination did not reveal any pencil outlines in *The Lady of the Lake*; however, painted outlines of his original composition are clearly visible on the canvas's reverse, where the paint penetrated the unprimed fabric.<sup>30</sup> Microscopic examination revealed that he mostly used two colors: the foreground figure in dark blue, the middle-ground riverbank in dark blue and black (used separately), and the hills and far riverbank in black. That variety may indicate that the outline colors in the initial design relate to an element's depth in the pictorial field. On the recto outlines of the rolling hills and middle-ground riverbank are visible as a combination of thick, scoring marks and ridges wholly unrelated to the finished composition.

Pippin filled in his initial outlines using a restricted palette typical of his work prior to 1937. Visual and microscopic examination of the canvas's reverse indicates that his preliminary color scheme largely follows the list in the statement he gave MoMA: earth colors such as ocher and umber, black, white, and dark green—plus lots of blue, which he had been using since the early 1930s.<sup>31</sup> The blues visible on the reverse are Prussian blue, either pure or modulated with white.<sup>32</sup> Initially, the water was painted with a combination of

blue and earth-colored pigments, and the sky was constructed as alternating, irregular strips of dark blue and turquoise that follow the hills' curving topline. The overall tonality of the image suggests twilight, much as the gray cast in *After Supper* (fig. 6) suggests dusk, extending the artist's interest in times of day; moreover, that painting's elongated clouds resemble the banded sky of *The Lady of the Lake*.

Pippin produced *The Lady of the Lake* in a set of painting campaigns of uncertain sequence and duration, but the paint layers offer some clues. For example, one can identify the canoe as a very late addition because it sits on top of the white water and white railing, which were already dry. He consistently waited for his paint to dry before adding new elements, suggesting that his revisions transpired over an extended period.

Early on, Pippin added the gray cabin and staircase atop a fully developed landscape, as is clear in the X-radiograph (fig. 8). They are only partly visible on the reverse because the oil medium seeped through the light-colored, probably thinly applied paint in the sandy foreground (at the bottom of the composition) and not through the darker, more thickly applied paint for the shore and trees in the middle ground. Despite this difference, both areas were painted on top of the same underlying ocher layer (the first one that he applied to the canvas), as demonstrated by examination and analysis of two cross-section samples removed from paint passages at the middle and bottom of the cabin

(fig. 9).<sup>33</sup> The cabin's staircase and railing, both visible on the reverse, are outlined carefully in the same dark blue used at the outset for the female figure, indicating that Pippin continued the blue/black color scheme for his outlines as his picture evolved.<sup>34</sup> At some point, he balanced the cabin by painting in the rocky peninsula at right and later the large evergreens at both edges of the canvas, additions that restrict the initial composition's panoramic view without altering the canvas's dimensions. Late in the painting's development, he revisited the area of the staircase to reorganize the handrail, paint the stairs white, and add the yellow canoe, enlivening that quadrant of the composition. Presumably about the same time, he filled in the space between the railings in bright green but never added the individual blades of grass that cover the rest of the lawn.

Pippin also used multiple campaigns to transform the body of water from relatively narrow and predominantly blue to wide and silvery, silhouetting the figure's head and chest against a light field and shifting the tonality of the composition to cool. First, he covered the water and distant shoreline with a unifying layer of gray paint made with titanium white, an opaque pigment that neutralized the underlying colors of blue, umber, and ocher. Then, after revising the foreground, he returned to scumble over the gray with white. The silvery areas are zinc white, the semiopacity of which created thin, modulated highlights, and the thicker ones are likely titanium.<sup>35</sup> His use of artist's paints, particularly these white pigments, demonstrates his familiarity with their properties and hints at how he conceived the image: the zinc white is painted around the foliage in the planter at right (which had already been painted atop the gray undercoat) but under the canoe and trellis, which came even later.<sup>36</sup>

Presumably about the time that Pippin reshaped the body of water, he completely reworked the top half of the picture by replacing the dark blue sky and brown

hills with a lighter blue sky, gray mountains, and a strip of trees separating them from the water below.<sup>37</sup> The changes redefine the composition in a few ways. Formally, the similar values of the blue and gray unify the top of the composition in a lighter block that aligns with the silvery color of the lake. Conceptually, the mountains fill the horizon, creating a sense of enclosure and perhaps security for the nude woman, who is dwarfed by their size, even as they further restrict the initial design's expansive view. Narratively, the blue sky, clouds, and birds signal daylight, instead of romantic twilight.

Microscopic examination indicates that Pippin executed the revisions in a few ways, the techniques and sequence of which are not entirely clear. He painted the strip of trees directly over a dark umber, like that of the hills visible through the back of the canvas. He blocked in the mountains with a thick, off-white layer, which shows a partial black outline at far right, then scumbled over it in various shades of gray to define their volume. For the sky, he neutralized the original, deep blue with a layer of middle gray, as he had done with the water below, then painted in a smaller sky by scumbling over the gray with two formulations of light blue. The paint above the mountain at right is more transparent: not only does the gray show through in places (see frontispiece), but also the dark band in that area on the X-radiograph indicates less radiopacity.

This brightening corresponds with an overall tendency in Pippin's work of the late 1930s that Edwin Alden Jewell of the *New York Times* observed in a review of 1940: "Whereas in his [Pippin's] first oil, upon which he says he spent three years, the forms are actually and laboriously built up in low relief by means of layer upon layer of thick, dark, enamel-like paint; in subsequent work the paint is smoothly, more thinly applied and the palette is wont to be a great deal brighter."<sup>38</sup> Pippin's growing preference for or access to bright whites

fig. 9 Photomicrographs of cross-section samples removed from *The Lady of the Lake*, from the cabin at middle (a) and bottom (b), as indicated by arrows on the detail of the painting, acquired with visible illumination and a 200x original magnification

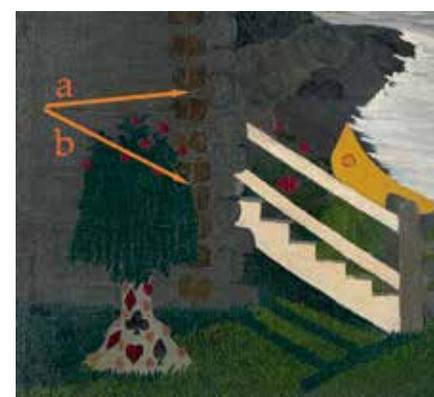
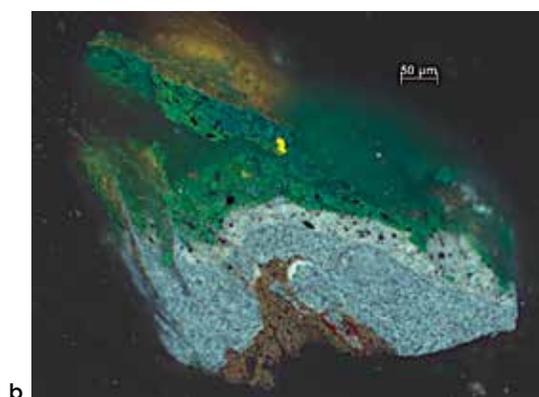
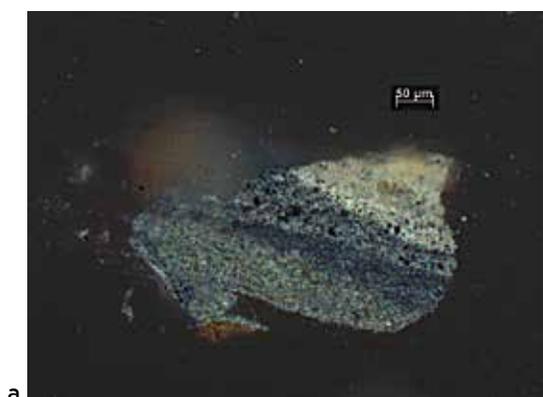
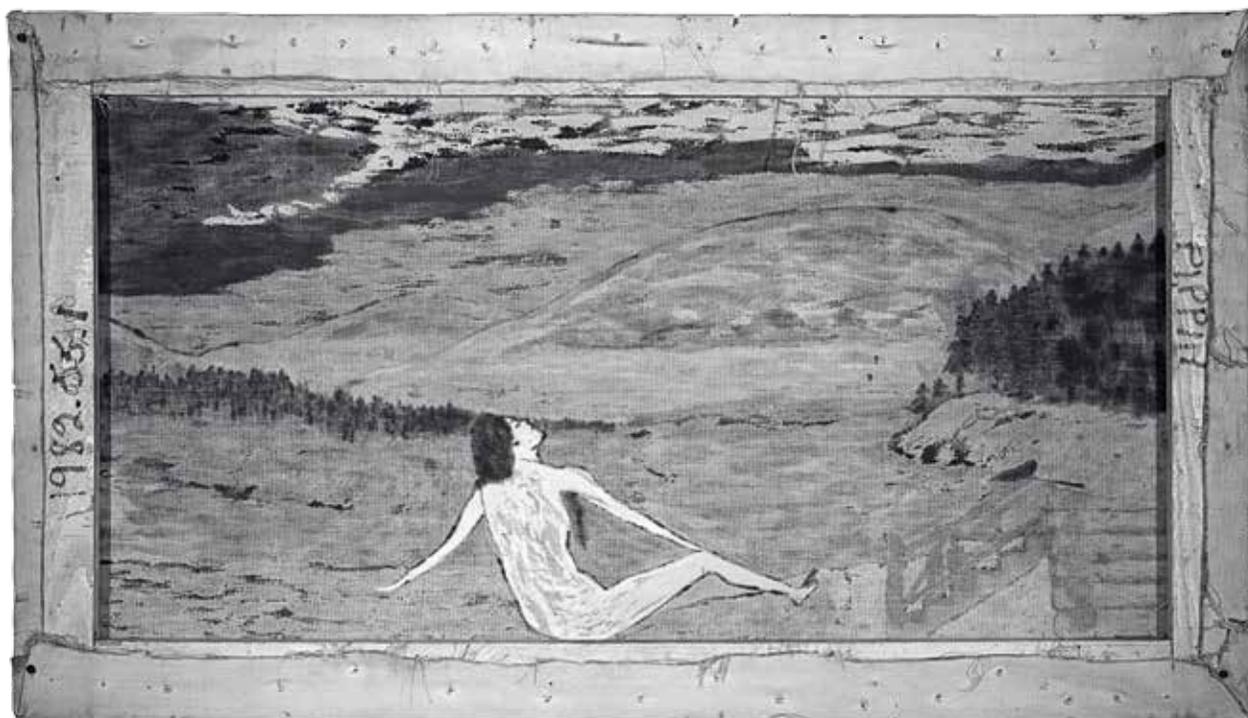


fig. 10 Infrared photograph of the reverse of *The Lady of the Lake* (fig. 1)



apparently motivated him to repaint much of two works about this time. By spring 1939 he had retouched *The Country Doctor* (ca. 1933–39, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) to send to his dealer in New York. By 1940 he had reworked *Highland Dairy Farmhouse, Winter* (ca. 1925–30) and renamed it *The Old Mill* (1940, collection of Merrill Wright, Seattle), probably to meet demand after his Philadelphia debut.<sup>39</sup> Pippin acknowledged the pressure at the time, happily explaining to a local reporter: “The way things look now it will be a sell-out, and I won’t have any pictures to bring back after the show’s over. . . . I’ve been running back and forth to Philadelphia so much I haven’t had much time to do any work in the past two weeks. I’ve got to get busy and get enough pictures together for another show, maybe in New York.”<sup>40</sup>

Visual examination of the front and X-radiography of *The Lady of the Lake* reveals that Pippin reworked the foreground extensively: changing the shoreline; overlaying the brown soil with green grass; creating, then reducing and recoloring a blanket; inserting, then reworking plants and planters; and, finally, experimenting with cast shadows in several places. The additions mostly signal the nude’s increasing distance from pristine nature, even as the figure itself remains fairly consistent. Her very pale, slightly pink hue is at odds with the stark white or gray Pippin often used for lighter skin tones in the 1930s (e.g., *After Supper*) and fits the somewhat warm coloration of *Major General Smedley Butler, USMC* (1938, collection of Philip Jamison, West Chester) and *A Chester County Art Critic (Portrait of Christian Brinton)* (1940, Philadelphia Museum of Art).<sup>41</sup>

Visual examination, X-radiography, and infrared photography of the reverse indicate that Pippin made repeated attempts to resolve the anatomy of the right shoulder before hiding the problem under the figure’s restyled hair, a change that contributed to the image’s iconographic reorientation from nature to culture (fig. 10). At first, the nude had long, black hair, maybe pulled into a braid or ponytail, which draped over her right shoulder, counter-gravitationally across her breast, and down along her side. To cover his painting difficulties, Pippin reworked the hair to fall partway down the figure’s back in gentle waves, lightened it to brown, and shortened it to preserve a view of the torso. The result



fig. 11 Detail of the blanket fringe of *The Lady of the Lake* (fig. 2)

traded the long, black tresses' romantic or exotic associations for those of contemporary fashion in the 1930s.

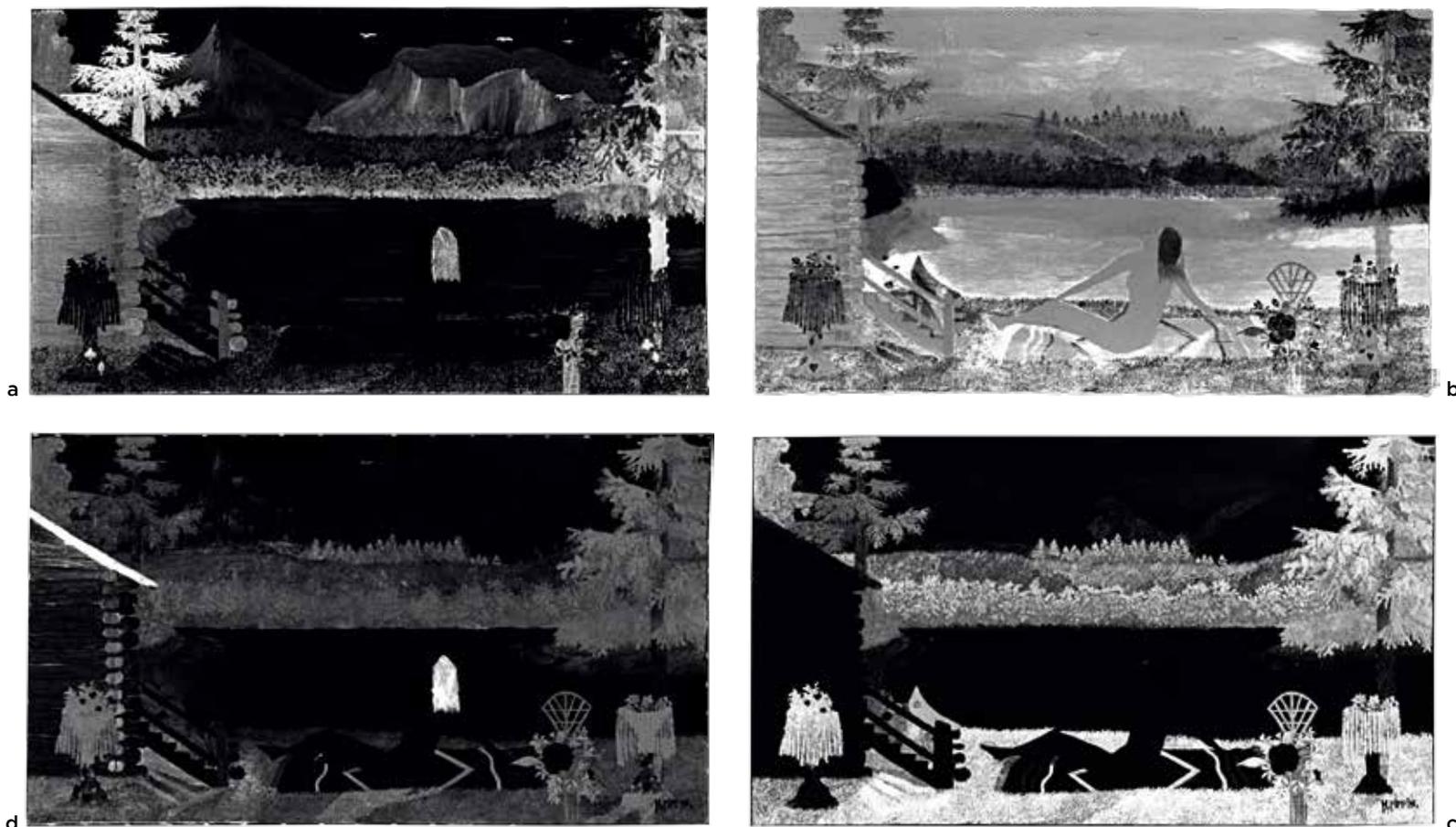
Initially, the nude reclined on a brown shore, which Pippin shifted to a grassy lawn fairly early, perhaps to complement the cabin as a sign of human alteration of the landscape. He reinforced that theme with the blanket, a literal intervention between the figure and the natural world. The textile originally extended almost to the stairs and the bottom framing edge, before Pippin overpainted the left and bottom edges with blades of grass. (In raking light, this area appears somewhat embossed and slightly more saturated in color than does the surrounding lawn.) Microscopic examination has revealed a partial, black outline along the blanket's top and bottom. After filling in and revising the blanket, Pippin covered its edges (and outline) with individual blades of grass.

Now bright white and green, the blanket was first rendered as an ochre and grayish-white field.<sup>42</sup> That field was bordered by a symmetrical set of undulating rose and spring green stripes, the colors of which survive in the fringe (fig. 11). That design evokes the toddler's blanket in *After Supper*, which commemorates the artist's childhood neighborhood in Goshen,

New York, and so constitutes a buried, autobiographical reference to the pleasures of domesticity.<sup>43</sup> Francis posits that the blanket may be Navajo in style, presumably on the basis of the large central diamond shape that marks the white-and-green version.<sup>44</sup>

The odd planters, an obvious sign of domesticated nature, are among the last and most reworked additions to the composition. They began as flare-shaped, ocher stands, which Pippin repainted gray, partially obscured with red flowers and pendulous foliage, then decorated with suits from a deck of playing cards (fig. 12).<sup>45</sup> Presumably about the same time, he added plants elsewhere to resolve compositional difficulties. Flowering plants fill the gap behind the stairs, and a trellised rosebush hides what may have been a tree stump like those in *Teacher's College Powerhouse* (ca. 1925–30, Harmon and Harriet Kelley Foundation for the Arts, San Antonio), *Abraham Lincoln and His Father Building Their Cabin at Pigeon Creek* (ca. 1934–37, Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia), and *The Getaway*.<sup>46</sup> This promiscuous display of flowers marks an early engagement with the floral subjects that he would come to favor heavily in the 1940s, as in *Victorian Interior I* and *Victorian Interior II*.<sup>47</sup> It also animates the lower half of the image with a

fig. 12 Elemental maps acquired by XRF imaging of the front of *The Lady of the Lake*. White indicates the distributions of (a) calcium, (b) zinc, (c) chrome, and (d) iron in the composition.



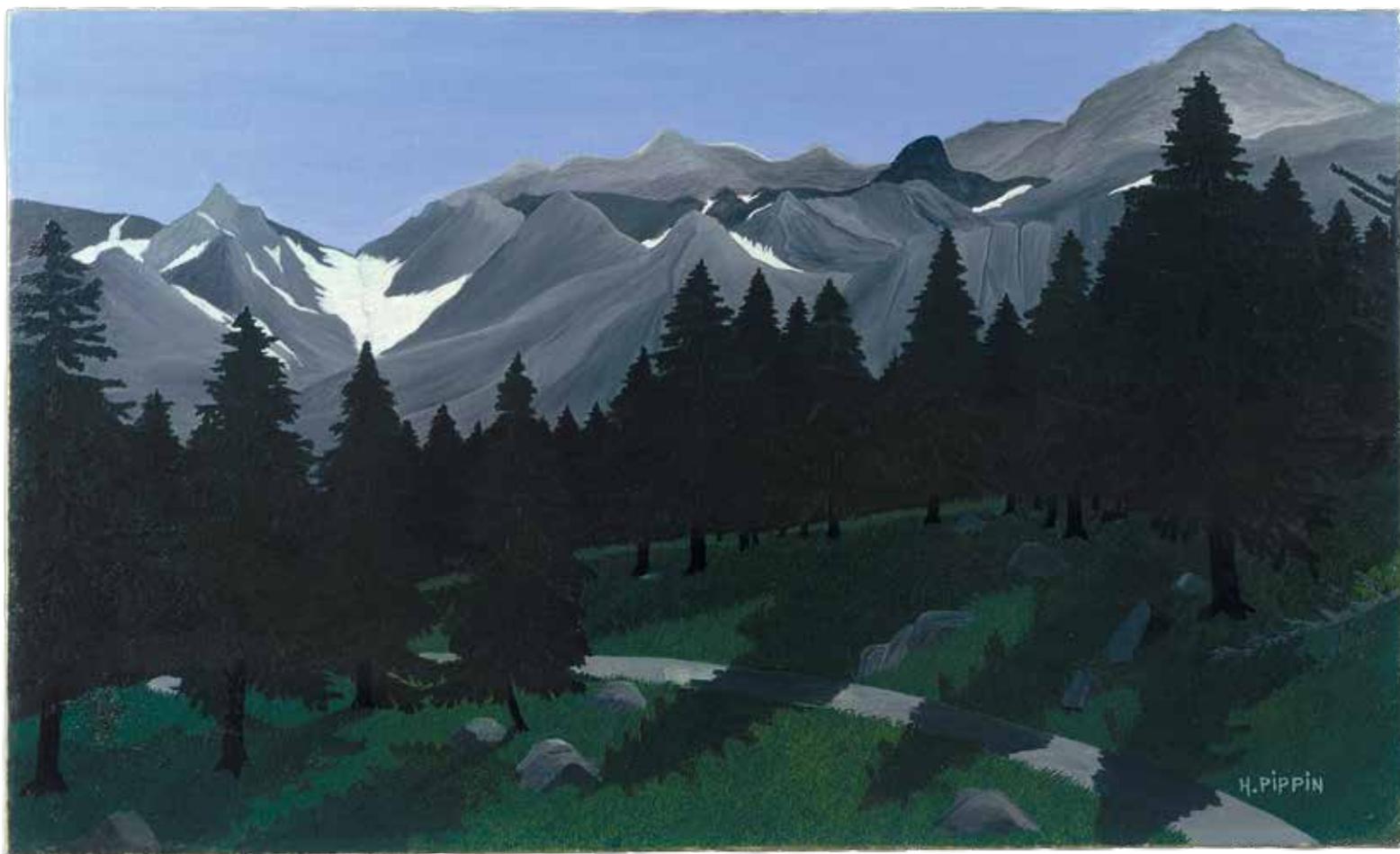


fig. 13 Horace Pippin. *Mountain Landscape (Lush Valleys)*, ca. 1936–39. Oil on fabric, 23 × 29½ in. (58.4 × 74.9 cm). Myron Kunin Collection of American Art, Minneapolis

rhythmic distribution of red, a color that Pippin rarely used with such enthusiasm in other works of the 1930s.<sup>48</sup>

X-ray fluorescence imaging indicates that Pippin used two visually identical but chemically distinct dark green, chrome-based paints: a formula with calcium for the two tall evergreens framing the composition, and one without for everything else, including late additions like the planters' foliage and trellis, which were inserted before and after, respectively, the lake's white scumbling (fig. 12a, c).<sup>49</sup> The distinct formulae indicate that Pippin used different tubes (and probably different brands) of the same paint color, perhaps because he made the additions at different times. This data, coupled with the shadows' inconsistent execution (all but one is positioned on the same diagonal), suggests that he devised the image's lighting scheme fairly late in his process and probably in more than one campaign. Rare in Pippin's oeuvre, shadows cast by natural light also appear in *Birmingham Meeting House* (1940, Myron Kunin Collection of American Art, Minneapolis) and *Mountain Landscape (Lush Valleys)* (ca. 1936–39, fig. 13).<sup>50</sup> The latter painting bears other commonalities with *The Lady of the Lake*:

gray mountains, a similar palette, its status as an anomalous subject in Pippin's work, and a supposed execution date of 1936.<sup>51</sup> Even so, *Mountain Landscape (Lush Valleys)* is darker in tone, its mountains are more dramatic, and shadows are more intrinsic to the composition.

Finally, Pippin signed *The Lady of the Lake* twice in his preferred location, the bottom right corner, and in his characteristic combination of upper and lower case letters, "H. PiPPiN" (fig. 14).<sup>52</sup> First, he signed on the grass in black in his standard block print, and later all but covered those letters with ornate ones in white paint akin to that of the stair and railing. Not only is the white hypervisible against the dark field, but the script is also eye-catching, with the ends of each letter embellished with small, branching points that evoke twigs or trees. Pippin used the distinctive style occasionally throughout his career, from *Shell Holes and Observation Balloon, Champagne Sector* (ca. 1931–37, Baltimore Museum of Art), to *A Chester County Art Critic: Portrait of Christian Brinton*, a gift to his first mentor, and finally to the *Barracks* (1945, Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.), the only canvas for which an oil study survives.<sup>53</sup>

Pippin rarely superimposed signatures.<sup>54</sup> On the contrary, in the late 1930s, he painted carefully around existing signatures on *Major General Smedley Butler, USMC* and *The Country Doctor* when brightening the pictures' sky and snow, respectively (changes that affect their tonalities, not compositions). In that light, might the superimposed signatures of *The Lady of the Lake* correlate with its extended evolution? The initial, black signature would represent a point at which Pippin prematurely considered the canvas finished, and the final, white one would follow subsequent revision(s), perhaps to the troublesome area around the stair. That the stair, railing, and signature are painted a similar white (titanium), perhaps for formal balance, raises the possibility of a connection.

Attention to the facture of *The Lady of the Lake* opens new lines of inquiry regarding the painting's importance, Pippin's process, and the methods by which his project has been understood. A particularly rich vein of investigation is the relationship between his title and Scott's poem, given that the initial composition lacked the cabin, garden, and boat that would seem to justify a debt to the text. That gap raises broader questions about the value of Pippin's titles as interpretative guides, since his own choices often differ from the names under which the works were shown and sold. For example, he

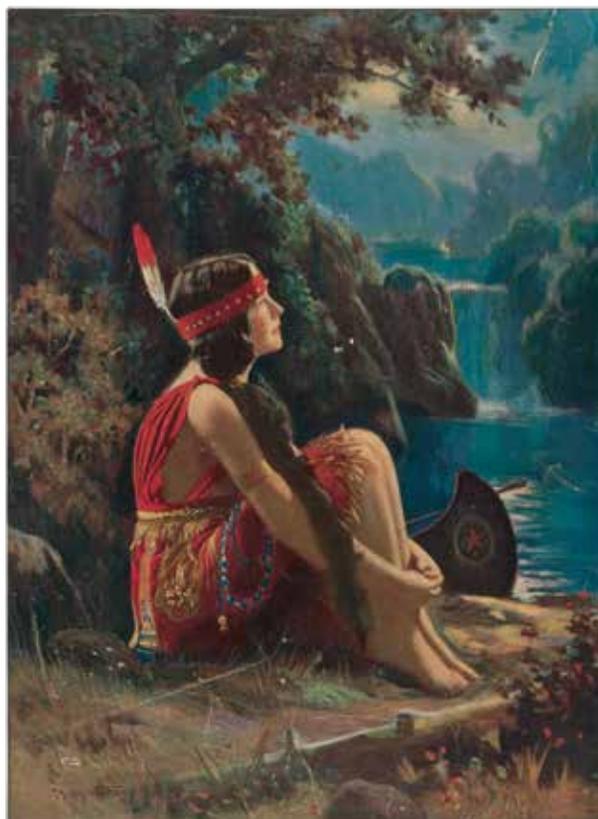
used *After Supper* for an image of Goshen, New York, that was long misnamed *After Supper: West Chester*.<sup>55</sup> Even more telling, *Mountain Landscape* bears a fragmentary label in Pippin's handwriting, probably from the 1930s, that indicates he named the painting *Lush Valleys*.<sup>56</sup> Discrepancies persist throughout his career and affect his most celebrated works; for example, he used *The Domino Game* for the painting now known as *The Domino Players* (1943, Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.) and *The Knowledge of God* for at least one work in the series now known as *The Holy Mountains I-IV* (1944-46).<sup>57</sup> In that light, the title of *The Lady of the Lake*, which seems only superficially related to the image and plays on a literary or popular cultural reference legible to sophisticated viewers, prompts speculation about the influence of Pippin's social and professional network in its selection.

If Pippin's first pass at *The Lady of the Lake* has less to do with Scott's poem than with analogizing a black-haired woman to nature, the painting's assessment as "more American Indian than . . . Scottish" merits a second look.<sup>58</sup> As experts of vintage illustrations Rick Martin and Charlotte Martin have observed, "Indian maidens" were ubiquitous in Pippin's day (about 1910 to 1940) in almanacs, posters, sheet music, cigar boxes, and especially calendars, where the figuration of Native Americans as attractive, seemingly defenseless, young women alone in the wilderness in waning light represented "a last gasp attempt at romanticizing the closing of the Old West at the end of the nineteenth century" (fig. 15).<sup>59</sup> Made by a host of artists less celebrated than Parrish, the illustrations sited their comely subjects in nature, often near water and under an evening sky, and the sometimes scantily clad women were consistently identified by long, black braids and maybe a canoe. In light of the iconographic parallels with *The Lady of the Lake*, Rodman's assertion that the work is based on an unidentified calendar image raises new possibilities. Tellingly, as Pippin eliminated his initial composition's relatively subtle signifiers of Native American identity—namely, the figure's long black hair, pristine landscape, and twilight setting—he introduced more obvious ones in the canoe and patterned blanket. Given that no direct quotations have yet been identified, the painting may synthesize multiple print sources, as does *John Brown Going to His Hanging* (1942, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts [hereafter PAFA], Philadelphia).<sup>60</sup> *The Buffalo Hunt* (1933, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York), another painting with a Native American theme that Rodman credited to an unidentified print source, may share a similar genesis and sentiment.



fig. 14 *The Lady of the Lake*, details of signature (top) and XRF maps (bottom) showing the distribution of calcium (white) and titanium (red) originating in the black and white paints respectively. The black pigment is a carbon-based black, such as bone black, and the white is titanium white.

fig. 15 R. Atkinson Fox  
(Canadian American,  
1860–1935). *In Meditation*,  
*Fancy Free*, ca. 1920s.  
Chromolithograph(?), 11 ×  
14¼ in. (27.9 × 36.2 cm)



Like the embedded blanket's reference to Goshen, *The Lady of the Lake* may also encode a personal connection in that Pippin grew up near the Pocono Mountains of eastern Pennsylvania, the site of an early iteration of the legend of Winona.<sup>61</sup> In that version, set as the Dutch were surrendering their colony to the English in the seventeenth century, the chief's daughter (an "Indian princess") leaped to her death from Winona Cliff, Pennsylvania, when her Dutch beloved announced his return to the Netherlands.<sup>62</sup> It is tempting to see parallels in that landscape (fig. 16) with the rolling hills and river of the initial design of *The Lady of the Lake*.

If *The Lady of the Lake* began as a Native American subject, how does its cabin relate to Pippin's sustained interest in the motif? By the late 1930s, he had already included cabins in his burnt-wood panels *The Bear Hunt II* (ca. 1925–30, Chester County Historical Society, West Chester), *Untitled (Winter Scene)* (ca. 1925–30, ex. coll. Anne Strick), and *Autumn Scene Near Durham, North Carolina* (ca. 1925–30, private collection, San Diego) as well as the paintings *Cabin in the Cotton* and *Abraham Lincoln and His Father Building Their Cabin at Pigeon Creek*—a group notable for its subjects' diversity. He continued in the 1940s, adding interior views like the unfinished *Family Supper (Saying Grace)*.

The artist's interest in the cabin motif probably started as a canny exploitation of the formal conso-

nance between the wood buildings and his wood panels; however, its persistence in his oil paintings suggests a deeper investment, as he used the cabin to signify home or security for historical and contemporary hunters, farmers, pioneers, and African American and European American families.<sup>63</sup> Individually, the cabin in *The Lady of the Lake* marks human encroachment on the natural landscape, but collectively might Pippin's cabins hint at a transhistorical, transracial commonality within the American experience?

On another level, the cabin draws attention to Pippin's self-described practice of "work[ing] my foreground from the background." That opaque phrase is usually taken to mean his practice of indicating depth by painting pictorial elements in layers, one atop the last. His earliest paintings, like *The Ending of the War: Starting Home* (1930–33, Philadelphia Museum of Art) and *Cabin in the Cotton*, are so heavily worked that they are effectively bas-relief. Although Pippin scaled back as the decade progressed, *The Lady of the Lake* retains some dimensionality in the figure's profile and tree leaves. Perhaps more important, its reverse demonstrates both compositional approaches that Pippin outlined in the MoMA catalogue. First, he blocked in the nude, lake, and hills together in a unified base layer, as if he had worked out their interrelationship in advance. He then added the cabin, blanket, and other elements on top in a process that seems to correspond with his foreground-from-background technique.<sup>64</sup> The initial version of *The Getaway* evinces a similar process, with the gray animal, red barn, and surrounding snow blocked in together, to which Pippin later added the fox on top of the snow.

Pippin's use of the terms "foreground" and "background" signals his familiarity, if not felicity, with the specialized language of pictorial composition. Their deployment in a catalogue devoted to autodidacts telegraphs his desire to position himself in a more sophisticated register than the one usually accorded self-taught artists. Notably, this ambition coincides with Pippin's first formal exhibitions at the Chester County Art Association (CCAA) and ties to boosters like painter N. C. Wyeth (1882–1945) and modernist critic and curator Christian Brinton, who midwived the artist's debut in 1937 and subsequent entry in *Masters of Popular Painting*. (It would still be a couple of years before Pippin met Carlen and enrolled at the Barnes Foundation, Merion, Pennsylvania, where his exposure to art history and theory is usually thought to have begun.<sup>65</sup>)

It would seem that seeing his work interpolated in exhibitions alongside that of Wyeth and other local painters had a profound influence on Pippin. His initial

take on *The Getaway* tracks closely with Wyeth's *The Fox*, now known as *Fox in the Snow* (ca. 1935, fig. 17), with which it appeared in the CCAA Annual of 1937, and he made at least one visit to the Wyeth family's studio.<sup>66</sup> This informal art education, which probably also included CCAA stalwarts like Brinton, seems to have spurred an interest in academic painting conventions that colored Pippin's work of the time. For example, his production of the late 1930s often seems designed to tick boxes on the hierarchy of genres by which academic art had been structured since the seventeenth century, as he augmented his record of history and genre paintings with the figure study of *The Lady of the Lake*, several portraits, *Mountain Landscape (Lush Valleys)*, the animal painting of *The Getaway*, and the still life of *The Warped Table* (1940, PAFA).<sup>67</sup> Even more telling, the short-lived attention to cast shadows evident in *The Lady of the Lake* and *Mountain Landscape (Lush Valleys)* bespeaks an engagement with the illusionistic representation of light that has characterized Western painting since the Renaissance.

Another hint at Pippin's burgeoning interest in art history is his substitution, probably in spring 1939, of a running red fox for the original gray animal of *The Getaway*.<sup>68</sup> The revision is usually credited to the influence of Winslow Homer's *Fox Hunt* (1893, PAFA), in which a desperate fox, beset by crows, crosses a snowbound coast.<sup>69</sup> *The Getaway* borrows Homer's figures, palette, and diagonal composition but inverts his grim narrative by giving the victorious fox a crow for dinner. If Pippin saw the *Fox Hunt* in person at PAFA, might he also have absorbed lessons from other mainstays of the collection? It would have been difficult to ignore John Vanderlyn's *Ariadne Asleep on the Island of Naxos* (1809–14, fig. 18), a lifesize, female nude with pale skin and dark hair, reclining waterside on a blanket, with woods and a dramatic peak behind her, especially if Pippin were already considering or working on his own nude composition.

Regardless of Pippin's exposure to or interest in *Ariadne*, the evidence of his paintings in the late 1930s, especially *The Lady of the Lake*, suggests that they functioned as self-reflexive object lessons by which he engaged and internalized fundamental elements of the Western tradition. The programmatic aspect of his project has gone largely unrecognized owing in no small measure to Pippin's closing sentence in the MoMA catalogue, "To me it seems impossible for another to teach one of Art."<sup>70</sup> Although the sentiment has often been taken as his dismissal of art education *tout court*, his sentence might be just as easily read as a full-throated avowal of self-education.

It is a small irony that Pippin's initial success coincided with (and maybe prompted) his experimentation with the very academic conventions that he was lauded for ignoring—an engagement evident in *The Lady of the Lake*, *Mountain Landscape (Lush Valleys)*, and *The Getaway*. He was sufficiently taken with this new direction in his work to submit *Mountain Landscape (Lush Valleys)* to a CCAA annual and send *The Getaway* to his dealer Hudson Walker, but nothing came of those efforts.<sup>71</sup> No evidence survives of similar plans for *The Lady of the Lake*, but its bright, elaborate, second signature may bespeak his pride. The three paintings debuted in early 1940 in his first solo show in Philadelphia, for which a glowing review reproduced an image of the nude and described it as "fascinating."<sup>72</sup> Even so, the painting found no buyer, while *Mountain Landscape (Lush Valleys)* and *The Getaway* went to a pair of sisters from Philadelphia's Main Line who became the artist's lifelong friends.<sup>73</sup>

By Pippin's first solo show in New York that October, the anomalies of *The Lady of the Lake* were plain to critic Edwin Alden Jewell, whose nonetheless favorable reviews dismissed the "whimsical" canvas as "no more than quaint—quite sincere, no doubt, but obscurely fanciful rather than creatively imaginative."<sup>74</sup> Undeterred,

fig. 16 J. H. Stall (active early 1900s). *Delaware Water Gap*, ca. 1911. Gelatin silver print, 7 × 32½ in. (17.8 × 82.6 cm). Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.



Carlen sent the painting to Pippin's solo shows at the Arts Club of Chicago in 1941 and the San Francisco Museum of Art in 1942, then to the Downtown Gallery, where it remained unsold at Pippin's death. The next year, Rodman listed it among the artist's "least successful canvases" and omitted it from the memorial exhibition he mounted in New York; it was likewise absent from Carlen's memorial show in Philadelphia.<sup>75</sup> The dealer sold Gingrich the painting sometime thereafter, but her attachment to it had already begun to wane by 1953, as she wrote him: "Sorry I wouldn't part with 'the den' at any price and don't want to sell the other [*Victorian Interior I*]. I would consider selling *The Lady of the Lake* at a good price. What do his things bring now? You're a super-salesman so work on your client about the beauties of *The Lady of the Lake*. George [Abell, her then-husband] hates it so! I of course love all Horace's things."<sup>76</sup>

Gingrich's 1955 divorce saved her the trouble of selling the painting, but its persistently ambivalent reception is telling. What do viewers find so off-putting? Jewell's complaints about its whimsy and opacity offer clues, since those traits fit uneasily with the perceived authenticity of Pippin's firsthand views of World War I and African American family life that initially brought him national attention.<sup>77</sup> Melville Upton, in another favorable review of Pippin's first New York show, distilled that appeal for his readers in the *New York Sun*:

To the art lover perhaps somewhat jaded by the sophistication and sameness of so much contemporary art, the painting of Horace Pippin will likely come as a welcome relief. . . . Getting his idea expressed so that it is clear to

him seems to have satisfied him, and although he has worked for years over a single canvas it never seems to have occurred to him to consult the work of others to see how they met certain technical problems. Such detached simplicity of outlook is rare and an asset in itself. But it doesn't by itself make an artist. Happily, he "has rhythm" as the stock phrase goes, and as most of his race, for he is a Negro, always seem to have. In addition he seems to have an instinctive feeling for color and design and a happy faculty in "spotting" his lights and darks, a heritage perhaps from savage ancestors not too far removed in point of time. And above all he has a driving sincerity that gives his works a certain validity irrespective of their indifference to, or ignorance of, the niceties of technical expression.<sup>78</sup>

fig. 17 N. C. Wyeth (American, 1882–1945). *Fox in the Snow* (*The Fox*), ca. 1935. Oil on hardboard, 28½ × 41 in. (72.4 × 104.1 cm). Arkell Museum at Canajoharie, New York, Gift of Bartlett Arkell, 1940



Almost certainly informed by Pippin's statement in the MoMA catalogue, Upton made his enthusiastic case for Pippin by using his modernist style as a screen on which to project racist assumptions about his heritage, motivations, and meanings. While the text may palliate the artist's formal innovation for viewers weary of "sophistication" and qualify him for a market that valorizes autodidacts on the basis of a marginalized social or cultural position, it also institutionalizes racial meanings, identities, and stereotypes in and beyond the visual arts, a field where quality is supposedly indifferent to extra-aesthetic considerations like race.<sup>79</sup> As is clear from Upton's omission of *The Lady of the Lake*, which was included in that show, the painting has no place in such a calculus. Not only does its dialogue with academic tradition undo the critic's characterization of Pippin as willfully immune to outside influence, but also its instantiation of African American agency in an interracial context (namely, a black man asserting his right to paint a nude, white woman) also counters the racial stereotypes on which such compromised analyses rest. Moreover, it does so at a time when black men were being lynched in the United States on the pretext that they posed a threat to the purity of white women.<sup>80</sup>

Pippin's supposed immunity to influence proved to be a remarkably durable interpretative model, partly because his paintings of the 1940s synthesize their references so adroitly that obvious experiments like *The Lady of the Lake* and *Mountain Landscape (Lush Valleys)* are essentially confined to his commissions.<sup>81</sup> As a result, Pippin's sources can be hiding in plain sight.<sup>82</sup> In recent decades, scholars have worked to unmake a model predicated on Pippin's isolation by theorizing his debt to popular culture or current events, as in the 1928 silent film of *The Lady of the Lake*. Our attention to Pippin's facture indicates that identifying his sources and references can

*fig. 18* John Vanderlyn  
(American, 1775–1852). *Ariadne  
Asleep on the Island of Naxos*,  
1809–14. Oil on canvas,  
68½ × 87 in. (174 × 221 cm).  
Pennsylvania Academy of the  
Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Gift of  
Mrs. Sarah Harrison (The  
Joseph Harrison, Jr. Collection)  
(1878.1.11)



be tricky, as the initial image of *The Lady of the Lake* leads in a different interpretative direction than its title would suggest. By demonstrating how carefully and thoughtfully he reworked that picture, how that development conflicts with his own discussions of his process, and how the result connects across his works of the 1930s, this object-based study sheds light on the scope of Pippin's ambition and agency at a transitional moment in his career and models a productive methodology for coming to terms with his complex, sometimes confounding project that might be extended to the work of his peers. Arguably more important, this new understanding of Pippin's process illuminates how porous the boundary between the art world's so-called outsiders and insiders can be.

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## NOTES

- 1 Rodman 1947.
- 2 John Brown (1800–1859) and Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865) were instrumental in abolishing slavery in the United States, Brown as a radical abolitionist and Lincoln as commander-in-chief of the Union Army during the Civil War. Marian Anderson (1897–1993), a native Philadelphian, was one of the most celebrated singers of the twentieth century. By the time Pippin painted two portraits of her in the early 1940s, she had already given her famous 1939 concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, arranged after she was denied permission to sing at Constitution Hall. Major General Smedley Darlington Butler (1881–1940) was a native of West Chester, Pennsylvania, and the most highly decorated marine in history at his death. By the time Pippin painted Butler's portrait in 1938, the retired general had supported the 1932 Bonus Army march on Washington, D.C., and published and promoted *War Is a Racket* (1935), an attack on the business interests that profit from warfare.
- 3 In Pippin's day, Henri Rousseau (1844–1910) of France and John Kane (1860–1934), a Scots American from Pittsburgh, were arguably the most celebrated autodidacts in the United States and much better known than Pippin's African American contemporaries Bill Traylor (1854–1949) of Montgomery, Alabama, and William Edmondson (1874–1952) of Nashville, Tennessee, even with the latter's solo show at the Museum of Modern Art (hereafter MoMA), New York, in 1937.
- 4 Rodman 1947, "Pippin's Works," pp. 82–88. Pippin's exhibition history and sales records are uneven. Documentation of his shows is nonexistent before 1937, when he made his debut in the Chester County Art Association (hereafter CCAA) Annual exhibition, and spotty before 1940, the year of his debut show in Philadelphia at the Carlen Galleries. Essentially no sales records survive from Carlen, but the Downtown Gallery, New York, which sold much of his work in the mid-1940s, kept excellent records. See Downtown Gallery Records, 1824–1974, bulk 1926–1969, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (hereafter Downtown Gallery Records, AAA).
- 5 According to Denise Jacques (2003, pp. 4, 20–21), Gingrich studied art in Paris and reportedly studied sculpture with Isamu Noguchi, who was a friend; she also built a sculpture studio in her house in Havana in the 1920s and sponsored Cuban artists and artisans.
- 6 Rodman 1947, p. 22. One example, *The Ending of the War: Starting Home* (1930–33, Philadelphia Museum of Art), survives only in a documentary photograph made when the canvas was relined. The other relined canvases were not documented. *Paul Dague, Deputy Sheriff of Chester County* (1937, Chester County Historical Society, West Chester) and *Coming In* (1939, private collection, courtesy of D. C. Moore, New York) appear to have been painted over abandoned compositions. Three paintings that might fit this study were unavailable for examination—*Portrait of My Wife* (ca. 1936–39, Harmon and Harriet Kelley Foundation for the Arts, San Antonio), *After Supper* (ca. 1935, collection of Leon Hecht and Robert Pincus-Witten, New York), and *Gas Alarm Outpost, Argonne* (ca. 1931–37, private collection)—so their supports and canvas preparations are unknown.
- 7 The initial design of *The Lady of the Lake* was discovered during a conservation examination in 2014.
- 8 See Rodman 1947, pp. 13–15, for discussions of Pippin's use of print sources and an illustration of the printed prototype for *Christ and the Woman of Samaria* (1940, Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia). For Parrish, see Hartigan 1993, p. 92, and Francis 2015, pp. 7–12. For Pippin's quotations of printed sources in other works, specifically the John Brown series, see Monahan 2015.
- 9 For the painting's relationship to Scott's poem, see "The Lady of the Lake," canto 1, verses 15–19, 25–26 (Scott 1908, pp. 13–16, 21–22); see also Hartigan 1993, pp. 92–93, and Francis 2015, pp. 11–13.
- 10 *Philadelphia Inquirer* 1940.
- 11 Stockbook, Downtown Gallery Records, AAA.
- 12 Dating Pippin's early work is problematic, partly because his own narratives about that early production are inconsistent. Pippin's earliest statement on the subject describes making seven burnt-wood panels, starting in 1925 and finishing before taking up canvas in 1930; thus, we assign them a date of about 1925–30; see "The Story of Horace Pippin as Told by Himself" [March 1938], Museum Exhibition Files, *Masters of Popular Painting* (MoMA Exh. #76, April 27–July 24, 1938), Department of Painting and Sculpture, MoMA. The early paintings are more complicated. He almost always cited *The Ending of the War: Starting Home* as his first painting, but its inscription, September 15, 1930–December 21, 1933, puts the painting after *The Buffalo Hunt* (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York), which was inscribed October 30 (31?), 1933. In the absence of inscriptions or other period documentation, we date the early paintings in line with their first appearance, usually in the form of a date range.
- 13 Exhibition Checklist, *Paintings by Horace Pippin*, April 14–May 3, 1942, Exhibition Records, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Archives, box 16, file 33.
- 14 After Pippin's successful submission to the CCAA Annual of 1937, its director, Christian Brinton, and his compatriots organized a solo show for the artist, included him in succeeding CCAA shows, and helped him obtain gallery representation in New York and Philadelphia.
- 15 Carlen Galleries 1940.
- 16 In addition to the solo show at the West Chester Community Center (1937), Pippin took part in the CCAA's annuals (1937–40) and the exhibition "Flowers in Art" (1938). The full extent of his participation in CCAA's projects is unknown as its archives have yet to be processed.
- 17 Bockrath and Buckley 1993. Francis (2015, p. 11) reads *The Lady of the Lake* as a demonstration of Pippin's "knowledge of landscape painting formulae" and recognition of the nude as "a standard by which Western artists measured themselves."
- 18 Horace Pippin, quoted in Cahill et al. 1938, pp. 125–26 (emphasis in original).
- 19 Blitzstein 1941, p. 12.
- 20 Frost 1944, p. 21. Frost was Pippin's only buyer from a show at the Bignou Gallery, New York, in 1940.
- 21 Bearden 1976, p. [1].
- 22 Edward Loper, oral history interview with Marina Pacini, AAA, May 12, 1989, transcript pp. 34–35.
- 23 See Lewis 2015 and Stein et al. 1993.
- 24 Rodman 1947, p. 13.
- 25 Switching the barn from red to gray makes sense compositionally and locally: red barns are conventional in New York, where Pippin was reared, but not in Chester County, Pennsylvania, where they were commonly white or weathered wood. Without removing a paint sample for cross-section analysis, it is impossible to know if Pippin darkened the sky in the final composition.

- 26 X-ray fluorescence (XRF) imaging of *Lady of the Lake* was carried out using a Bruker M6 Jetstream instrument. The front and the back of the painting were imaged at 90 msec/pixel, with the X-ray source operated at 50 kV and 0.5 mA. For acquiring maps of the front of the picture, a 500 micron spot size and a 750 micron step size were used, and for the back, a 700 micron spot size and a 700 micron step size. A detail of the area on the front with the signature was scanned with a 400 micron spot size and a 400 micron step size at 120 msec/pixel. Raman spectroscopy measurements were carried out in two paint cross sections removed from the front of the picture and in five sample scrapings removed from the back using a Renishaw Raman 1000 Microscope System, with a 785 nm laser excitation.
- 27 The raw canvas is amply visible on the reverse. Now discolored, it would have been off-white originally. The tacking edges in direct contact with the wood strainer have yellowed from wood lignin staining. The canvas's reverse has also yellowed due, in part, to the oil medium (not pigment) penetrating the fibers, which has oxidized over time.
- 28 Bockrath and Buckley 1993, pp. 171–72. The four paintings are *Dogfight over the Trenches* (ca. 1939, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.), *Portrait of My Wife*, *The Getaway*, and *Coming in*. *Dogfight over the Trenches* is painted on a black priming layer.
- 29 *Mountain Landscape (Lush Valleys)* (ca. 1936–39, Myron Kunin Collection of American Art, Minneapolis) has a stretcher that appears similar in construction. Stretchers, unlike strainers, can be expanded to tighten a loose canvas by tapping the small keys into the slots cut into the inner corners.
- 30 That does not necessarily mean that pencil outlines are absent, only that they cannot be detected because of the thickness of the paint layers. Dark pigments, such as carbon-based blacks and some blues, inherently block infrared wavelength penetration, which can render graphite marks invisible in the infrared reflectogram.
- 31 See, for example, the panel *Autumn Scene Near Durham, N.C.* (ca. 1925–30, private collection, San Diego) and painting *Cabin in the Cotton* (ca. 1931–37, Art Institute of Chicago).
- 32 The front of the painting was noninvasively analyzed by XRF imaging, except for two samples removed from the cabin for cross-section analysis. To identify the blue pigment on the front, a sample for Raman spectroscopy analysis would be necessary.
- 33 The two samples revealed similar stratigraphy and pigment combinations, including titanium white, a carbon-based black and some barium white, in addition to the chrome yellow and Prussian blue in the sample from the bottom spot. Raman-spectroscopy analysis has identified that the ochre paint is mainly composed of chrome yellow, a carbon-based black, and iron earth pigments.
- 34 The dark blue pigment was identified as Prussian blue by Raman spectroscopy.
- 35 Titanium white in its anatase form and zinc white were identified by Raman spectroscopy in paint samples and mapped throughout the overall composition by XRF imaging. It is difficult to say which pigment was used for thick highlights because the three white pigments (lead, titanium, and zinc) show some distribution in that area. It may have been Permalba brand, an opaque combination of zinc and titanium whites produced by F. W. Weber that Pippin was known to use in the 1940s (Bockrath and Buckley 1993, p. 174).
- 36 By early 1938 Pippin was using Weber paints, a brand of artist's paints made in Philadelphia; see his statement "How I Paint" [March 1938], Museum Exhibition Files, *Masters of Popular Painting* (MoMA Exh. #76, April 27–July 24, 1938), Department of Painting and Sculpture, MoMA.
- 37 There are no clues as to the timing of this revision beyond the fact that it lies under late additions to the evergreen foliage framing the sky on the right and left.
- 38 Jewell 1940a.
- 39 The degree of repainting in *The Country Doctor* is evident from the box Pippin reserved around his signature. The painting was among three that Pippin had sent to the dealer Hudson Walker in New York; see Hudson D. Walker Papers, 1920–1982, AAA. *The Old Mill* was first recorded in Pippin's solo show at the Bignou Gallery, New York, September 30–October 12, 1940. As indicated by the partly overpainted sticker at lower right, it was exhibited as entry "15," *Highland Dairy Farmhouse, Winter* (ca. 1925–30) in his solo show at the West Chester Community Center, June 8–July 5, 1937.
- 40 See Straley 1940 quoted in Stein 1993, p. 19.
- 41 Likewise, the figures' skin in *Cabin in the Cotton* is charcoal gray, and that of the figures in *Paul Dague, Deputy Sheriff of Chester County* and *Coming In* is stark white.
- 42 The blanket's initial coloration is partly visible under a microscope in some areas of the figure's shadow.
- 43 See Pippin's letter to "My dear friends," about June–July 1946 (Goshen Public Library, New York), which explains that he made *After Supper* after finding the neighborhood torn down on a visit to the town in 1935.
- 44 Francis 2015, p. 11.
- 45 The planters are particularly visible in the iron-distribution map obtained by XRF imaging, which reflects the presence of ochre pigments that contain iron oxides as the main colorants.
- 46 The object under the rosebush is discernible as a gray shape through visual examination and in the X-radiograph and as a vaguely cruciform shape in the calcium-distribution map obtained by XRF imaging (fig. 12a).
- 47 Other early examples include *The Admirer* (1939), now lost and never photographed, which supposedly depicted a baby in a garden, and the fantastical *Giant Daffodils* (1940, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts [PAFA], Philadelphia), which combines the oversize flowers with a realistically rendered spaniel.
- 48 The plentiful red brick of *Coming In* and poppies of *Dogfight over the Trenches* represent exceptions, as would red flowers if they appear in the garden depicted in *The Admirer*.
- 49 The chrome-based green pigment is either chrome oxide or viridian, which is a hydrated chrome oxide, and is mixed with a yellow iron earth pigment. The rest of the green paints in the composition include variable amounts of calcium, an element often present as filler in paint-tube formulations.
- 50 The shadows in *Portrait of Marian Anderson* (1940–46, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library) seem to mimic studio lighting conditions. Shadows produced by fire- or candlelight appear occasionally: *Amish Letter Writer* (1940, collection of the Davidsons, Los Angeles), *Six O'Clock* (1940, collection of Eddie C. and C. Sylvia Brown, Baltimore), *John Brown Reading His Bible* (1942, Myron Kunin Collection of American Art, Minneapolis), *Interior* (1944, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.), *Abe Lincoln's First Book* (1944, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh), and *Barracks* (1945, Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.).
- 51 The painting was not exhibited with a date in Pippin's lifetime, and Rodman gives no evidence for the one he assigns. See Rodman 1947, p. 2.

- 52 See Bockrath and Buckley 1993, p. 176, for Pippin's signatures.
- 53 Similar signatures appear on *Dogfight over the Trenches*, *Christ and the Woman of Samaria*, *The Trial of John Brown* (1942, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco), *West Chester, Pennsylvania* (1942, Wichita Art Museum, Kansas), *Mr. Prejudice* (1943, Philadelphia Museum of Art), and *Abraham Lincoln, the Good Samaritan* (1943, PAFA).
- 54 Pippin superimposed a bright green signature on a dark green one in *My Backyard* (1941), which was reportedly destroyed.
- 55 Pippin used *After Supper* in his letter to "[his] dear friends" in Goshen in 1946, by which point Carlen had already shown and sold the painting as *After Supper, West Chester* and inscribed that name on the face of the drawing.
- 56 The label fragment indicates only the title's first letters, but the whole text appears in the checklist, Delaware Art Museum 1974, unpaginated.
- 57 The series comprises *The Holy Mountain I* (1944, collection of Camille O. and William J. Cosby Jr.), *The Holy Mountain II* (1944, collection of Leslie Anne Miller and Richard Worley, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania), *The Holy Mountain III* (1945, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.), and *The Holy Mountain IV*. Carlen and Rodman seem to be largely responsible for the changed titles, as in the case of *After Supper*. For *The Domino Game*, see Pippin's letter to Carlen, February 1, 1943, and for *The Knowledge of God*, see Pippin's letter to Carlen, February 5, 1945, both Carlen Galleries, Inc., Records, 1775–1997, bulk 1940–1986, AAA. Until 2017, Pippin's preferred title, *The Ending of the War—Starting Home*, had been supplanted by the variant *End of the War—Starting Home*, which appeared in exhibition checklists starting in 1937. For other examples of multiple titles assigned to a given work, see Monahan 1993, pp. 194–203.
- 58 *Philadelphia Inquirer* 1940.
- 59 Martin and Martin 1997, p. 186. Among the artists known for such work are Edward M. Eggleston (1882–1941), R. Atkinson Fox (1860–1935), F. R. Harper (1876–1948), and Henry (Hy) Hintermeister (1897–1972). The Land O'Lakes logo is a survival of that period.
- 60 Charlotte Martin, email to Anne Monahan, October 26, 2016.
- 61 Pippin also made an early panel titled *Hunting Lodge, Pocono Mountains* (ca. 1925–30, location unknown), which may be *Untitled (Winter Scene)* (ca. 1925–30, ex. coll. Anne Strick).
- 62 For the Winona story, see Brodhead 1870 and "The Legend of Lover's Leap," February 2010, Monroe County Historical Association, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, [www.monroehistorical.org/articles/files/021410\\_loversleap.html](http://www.monroehistorical.org/articles/files/021410_loversleap.html).
- 63 For example, *Cabin in the Cotton* depicts a black family and *Abraham Lincoln and His Father Building Their Cabin at Pigeon Creek* depicts a white one.
- 64 Bockrath and Buckley 1993, p. 167.
- 65 Pippin apparently met Carlen not long before his show opened at the gallery in January 1940 and began attending classes at the Barnes Foundation on January 16, 1940; Barnes Foundation archivist Barbara Beaucaer, email to Anne Monahan, August 9, 2016.
- 66 Chester County Art Association 1937; Wyeth 1971, p. 803.
- 67 Pippin's portraits include *Portrait of the Artist's Wife, Paul Dague*, *Major General Smedley Butler, USMC*, and *Coming In*. His earliest animal painting is probably *The Moose I* (1936), which is unlocated and apparently undocumented.
- 68 According to Elizabeth Sparhawk-Jones's undated letter to Hudson Walker of late March or early April 1939 (Carl Ziggrosser Collection, Archives, Philadelphia Museum of Art), Pippin sent *The Getaway* to the dealer even though it was unfinished.
- 69 That relationship is reinforced by the possibility that Pippin's chosen name for the painting was *The Fox*. On the other hand, Hartigan (1993, p. 83) reads the subject as a reference to life in Chester County.
- 70 Cahill et al. 1938, p. 126. The impression is compounded by reports like that of Romare Bearden, who recalled that "Pippin paid little attention to paintings of other artists hanging on the walls" of the Downtown Gallery in 1942; see Bearden 1976, p. [1].
- 71 Affixed to the backing board of *Mountain Landscape* is a fragment of a CCAA submission label, but no record of the painting in a CCAA annual has come to light.
- 72 *Philadelphia Inquirer* 1940, p. 14. The exhibition (Carlen Galleries 1940) comprised twenty-two paintings and five burnt-wood panels.
- 73 They are Mrs. Edmund C. Evans and Miss Ellen Winsor of Paoli, Pennsylvania, who lived about a mile down the road from Jane Kendall Gingrich in the early 1940s.
- 74 Jewell 1940a and 1940b, reviewing Bignou Gallery 1940.
- 75 Rodman 1947, p. 13. M. Knoedler and Co. 1947 and Art Alliance 1947.
- 76 Jane Kendall Abell [later Gingrich] to Robert Carlen, November 27, 1953; Carlen Galleries Records, AAA.
- 77 Prior to Pippin's show at the Bignou Gallery, New York, critics would have known him from the three war scenes and *Cabin in the Cotton* on view in "Masters of Popular Painting." *Cabin in the Cotton* was erroneously presumed to represent his childhood memories of the American South. For more on the correlation between the perception of authenticity and value in the field of self-taught art, see Fine 2003.
- 78 Upton 1940, p. 15.
- 79 Omi and Winant 2015.
- 80 For the racial implications of Pippin's subject, see Francis 2015, p. 11.
- 81 For *Mr. Prejudice* as a commission that attempts to synthesize diverse sources, see Rodman 1947, p. 4, and Puchner 2015.
- 82 Monahan 2015.

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