

An aerial landscape painting of a river valley at dusk. The river flows from the top left towards the bottom center, curving to the right. The valley is filled with green fields and dark trees. In the foreground, there is a large, dark, textured area that looks like a field or a forest. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting sunset or sunrise. The overall style is impressionistic with visible brushstrokes.

Wilhelm Neusser

PASTORAL
PRESENT

Fruitlands Museum 2019



Wilhelm Neusser

PASTORAL PRESENT

April 15, 2019 – March 22, 2020

At left: Installation View, *A New View*, Fruitlands Museum, 2019
Cover: Wilhelm Neusser, *Fruitlands/River* (1936), 2019, oil on paper/board, 18 × 24 inches

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Régis François Gignoux (1816–1882)
Mountain Valley, (detail), ca. 1850
oil on canvas
42 × 54 inches





P R E F A C E

Pastoral Present is an artistic intervention by Wilhelm Neusser, wherein he created a series of paintings in response to nineteenth-century landscapes from Fruitlands Museum's permanent collection. More than fifty paintings covered the gallery walls in the exhibition *A New View*, which opened in September 2017, and that display formed the basis of this project.

The curatorial staff sought to create a breathtaking effect for this permanent collection display and looked to 1947 for inspiration. That year, Clara unveiled a new addition to the Picture Gallery to show her landscape painting collection, which is remarkable in size and scope for a small Museum. In this inaugural show, the paintings were hung salon-style, an exhibition method that originated in the Salons, or juried exhibitions, of France in the 1700s and 1800s. The Salons were typically held in palaces, where the ornate frames and numerous canvases appeared in harmony with the opulent surroundings, closely hung to allow for the ready comparison of many artists' work.

Today, the triple-stacked rows upon the walls of Fruitlands Museum's octagonal gallery function as a passive art history education. With focused gazing, commonalities emerge. The horizon

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/River (1937), (detail), 2019
oil on paper/board
18 × 24 inches

lines, peaceful harbors with little boats, blasted trees in the lower left quadrant, softly sloping hills, and tiny foreground figures are part of a recognized formula. Gradually, these similarities might fall away, allowing unique aspects of each painting to emerge, promoting a new level of understanding about the artwork.

Sears began to acquire landscape paintings in earnest in her eighties. They compose the final chapter to half a century of her study of the region. She hoped that preserving art and material culture might bring her and future generations closer to understanding things unseen and inexpressible. Erin Corrales-Diaz's essay, "The Very Essence of New England," provides an engaging and informative telling of the Hudson River School movement as it relates to this collection.

In 2019, Neusser selected specific paintings from *A New View* to which he would respond, with the exhibition as an additional layer of context. This project builds on his site-specific approach as executed in his 2017 series, *Provincial Perspectives*, at the Goethe Institut in Boston, MA. There, the ornate Chippendale architectural molding served as frames for a group of large scale landscapes, opening the interior to painted views of suburban Germany. At Fruitlands, five of Neusser's landscapes from his larger *Fruitlands* series were integrated into the installation over the course of several months. Similarly sized and framed, his paintings are not abrupt interruptions to the salon-style display, but embed contemporary themes, encouraging a renewed engagement with the historic collection.

Shana Dumont Garr, *Curator, Fruitlands Museum*





THE VERY ESSENCE of New England

Clara Endicott Sears and the Hudson River School

ERIN CORRALES-DIAZ, PH.D.

Upon arriving at Fruitlands Museum on Prospect Hill, most visitors—myself included—note the vast panoramic view of the Nashua Valley with Mount Wachusett in the distance.¹ Frequently mentioned in newspaper accounts and museumgoer commentary, the vista from this “sunny hillside” transported the visitor back to rural, and more importantly, premodern New England.² Such a perspective was a calculated move on behalf of Clara Endicott Sears (1863–1960), who certainly considered the land for its strategic location. Sears recounted how she discovered the site during her countryside drives: “My Mother and I came frequently to look across the valley and to see the sunset behind Wachusett Mountain. Finally, I could not get the place out of my mind.”³ Before any of

View of Nashua River Valley at Fruitlands Museum, September 2019

1. Title originates from a letter from Clara Endicott Sears to Miss Winifred Willard, November 7, 1941, Fruitlands Museum Archives. Cited in Megan M. Kennedy, “This Place is Not Meant for Recreation. It is Meant for Inspiration: The Legacies of Clara Endicott Sears” (Master’s Thesis, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2005), 20.
2. “On a Sunny Hillside,” *Fitchburg Sentinel* (Fitchburg, MA), April 5, 1930, 6.
3. *Boston Transcript*, April 20, 1936, Fruitlands Museum Archives. Cited in Kennedy, “This Place in Not Meant for Recreation,” 11.



Asher B. Durand (1796–1886)
North Mountain Reservation, Essex County, New Jersey
oil on canvas
23 × 30.25 inches

the historic homes and museums on the property, it was the pastoral perspective that acted as a catalyst for Sear’s vision.

The power of place similarly inspired a group of young, loosely connected artists to paint the American scenery in the mid-nineteenth century. Originating in the Hudson River Valley, artists, many European émigrés, came to view their surroundings with “surpassing interest.”⁴ Christened the “Hudson River School” by a disparaging critic to imply the style’s provincial and repetitious subject in the 1870s, the moniker has since come to represent a celebration of the American environment.⁵ Often considered America’s first true artistic style, Hudson River School artists saw value in the nascent nation’s “unsullied” wilderness as a site for spiritual renewal and a source of national pride. By setting their sights and their brushes towards the landscape of the New World, these artists embraced a genre previously considered unpopular and unremunerative.

In 1825, a young English painter, Thomas Cole (1801–1848), traveled up the Hudson River to the Catskills. There, among the dramatic cascading waterfalls and dense woodlands, he must have experienced a profound epiphany as he began to draw his surroundings. Based on his initial sketches of the region, Cole produced a series of paintings that catapulted his career and marked the beginning of the Hudson River School. Largely self-taught, Cole pioneered a novel interpretation of the landscape through his detailed observation and exposure to British Romanticism. Later, Cole would recount how America’s scenery was “most distinctive” in comparison to the smoke-filled skylines of

4. Thomas Cole, “Essay on American Scenery,” *American Monthly Magazine* 7, no. 1 (January 1836), 1.

5. Kevin J. Avery, “A Historiography of the Hudson River School,” in Kevin J. Avery, et al., *American Paradise: The World of the Hudson River School* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1987), 3–7.





industrial Britain.⁶ Recognizing value in the environment, Cole implored Americans, especially its artists, to take pleasure and pride in the interminable forests and geological marvels of the New World. For Cole, the sublimity of wilderness illuminated the diminutive stature of man in the face of divine providence. While Cole deplored the “ravages of the axe,” he recognized the necessity of man’s destructive intervention as “the road society has to travel.”⁷

Subsequent generations of artists followed Cole’s idealized naturalism and offered their own interpretation of the vastness of the United States and beyond. In so doing, they expanded the school’s purview while continuing to emphasize the importance of wilderness preservation. After Cole’s sudden death in 1848, his friend and contemporary Asher B. Durand (1796–1886) assumed a leading role in the Hudson River School. Inspired by the emerging plein air work abroad, Durand encouraged his followers to “go first to Nature to learn to paint landscape.”⁸ Durand would execute meticulous studies of forest interiors and moss-covered rocks that critics heralded for their accuracy and close examination of nuanced forms over expansive vistas. Frederic Edwin Church (1826–1900), Cole’s only student, and Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902) retained Cole’s emotive sublimity of dramatic vistas, towering peaks, and violent storms, but expanded the style’s geological purview beyond the Hudson River Valley to regions representative of untouched potential such as the tropics, the Arctic, and the American West. Other artists, such as John Frederick Kensett (1816–1872) and Sanford Robinson Gifford (1823–1880), explored atmospheric states of diffused light, often in intimate scale. George Inness (1825–1894) came of age during the Hudson River School and his early paintings emulated the work of Cole and Durand in their stylistic precision and interest in man’s place in nature. Yet following the American Civil War, Inness and, later, his follower Alexander Helwig Wyant (1836–1892), abandoned the tradition of naturalism for a softened palette and brushstrokes, seeking the spiritual through tonal harmonies present in the landscape. Despite their sometimes divergent approaches to capturing their surroundings, artists associated with the Hudson River School all display a consciousness of environmental awareness and an impulse to depict the tenuous relationship between humanity and nature.

6. Cole, “Essay on American Scenery,” 5.

7. *Ibid.*, 12.

8. Asher B. Durand, “Letters on Landscape Painting. Letter I,” *Crayon I* (January 3, 1855), 2.

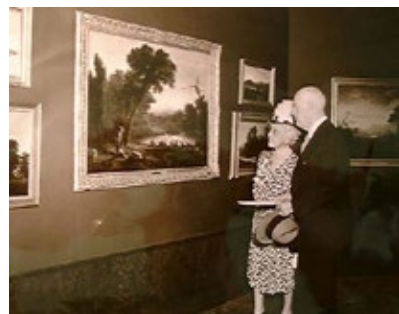
Sanford Robinson Gifford (1823–1880)

Valley Sunset, 1860

oil on canvas

18 × 24 inches

By the 1870s, the Hudson River School fell out of favor with collectors, who preferred artwork that reflected fashionable European styles of the period, such as Realism and Impressionism. Yet major events like the World Wars and the Great Depression ushered in an era of increased nationalism and suspicion of modern life. What emerged were a small group of New England collectors fevered with preserving an “authentic” American past: Electra Havemeyer Webb, Maxim Karolik, and Clara Endicott Sears, among others. They were interested in acquiring artwork deemed distinctly American—architecture, folk art, and Hudson River School paintings.⁹ As early as 1918, Sears expressed her concerns about “the rush of modern life” and its detrimental impact on the rural landscape.¹⁰ This fear of a fading New England regional identity prompted Sears to seek out a place that retained its historic associations and picturesque scenery. The discovery of a farmhouse tied to the short-lived nineteenth-century utopic experiment, Fruitlands, on her property precipitated Sears to begin researching and reviving the region’s past. Towards the end of her life, after constructing three museums, Sears built a picture gallery in 1939 to hold her collection of American folk art and Hudson River School paintings.¹¹ The latter, her final enterprise, consisted of over 125 paintings, representing Sears’ discerning eye for beauty and her intent to inspire a new view of the old New England landscape.



Clara Endicott Sears showing gallerist David Vose through her new picture gallery, ca. 1947.

Although nearly a century apart, Clara Endicott Sears and the Hudson River School painters are implicitly woven through a mutual interest in capturing a harmonious, and distinctly American, relationship with their surroundings. For the nineteenth-century American painters, especially Thomas Cole, to celebrate the American wilderness also meant to contend with its eventual destruction in the name of progress. Likewise, Sears lamented the demise of the landscape of her past, eventually becoming an early preservationist. She resisted the pull of modern life by restoring historic structures and acquiring collections using the environs of Harvard as a guide. In particular, her collection of “the pioneers of landscape painting in this country”

9. See John Wilmerding, “Outdoor Painting: Shelburne Museum in Context,” in Thomas Denenberg, et al., *Painting a Nation: American Art at Shelburne Museum* (New York: Skira Rizzoli, 2017), 9–15.

10. Clara Endicott Sears, *The Bell-Ringer: An Old-Time Village Tale* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1918), vi.

11. Initially, the Picture Gallery was built to house Sears’ collection of American folk art, but an addition in 1947 was created for her Hudson River School paintings.

Octavia Porter (dates unknown)
Landscape, (detail), 1858
oil on canvas
21.74 × 27.75





emphasizes the serene surroundings and preservationist context of Fruitlands' historic past.¹² One former museum director, aware of the crucial connection between the environment and Sears' preservationist impulses, christened Fruitlands as "a museum of the New England landscape."¹³ Indeed, from Prospect Hill, one can experience, in Cole's words, "the midst of American scenery—it is his own land; its beauty, its magnificence, its sublimity."¹⁴

12. Clara Endicott Sears, *Highlights Among the Hudson River Artists* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1947), xiv.
13. Ellen K. Rothman, "Fruitlands: Landscape as Lens on the Past," *Mass Humanities*, Fall 2000, <http://masshumanities.org/about/news/foo-fl/>.
14. Cole, "Essay on American Scenery," 1.

John Frederick Kensett (1816–1872)
In the Catskills, (detail), ca. 1860
oil on canvas
27 × 25.25 inches



PASTORAL PRESENT

SHANA DUMONT GARR

Pastoral Present seeks to creatively locate the role of Hudson River School painting at the nexus of communication, aesthetics, and history. Wilhelm Neusser's patently new surfaces have a clear message within Fruitlands Museum's paintings gallery: the works of art surrounding them were once as new. When paintings by beloved artists including Albert Bierstadt, Frederic Church, and Asher B. Durand were first presented in the 1800s, they were met with a measure of astonishment. Many viewers did not yet know what to make of them because, although representational, they did not directly refer to a biblical or historical narrative. Innovative in their time, Hudson River School painters built upon past visual strategies, while also responding to concerns of their day, including rapid change as a result of industrialization and the westward expansion of the United States. Then, over more than a century, as patina formed, the paintings lost the element of surprise and the potency of confrontation.



Pastoral Present questions how and why the Hudson River Valley style has an incredibly enduring and loyal following. This project is about time, and its slippage, in regard to art history and visual expression. As art becomes more familiar over time, our relationship with it changes, but this project suggests that is possible to regain the element of surprise, and to appreciate the enigma of the new.

Neusser's paintings counterbalance the consideration of art history and geographic reality, a dynamic approach that constructively complements this collection. A native of the Rhineland region of Germany, he was familiar with the Dusseldorf School of Painting where American artists, including those of the Hudson River School, traveled to study in the 1830s and 1840s. This art historical interest manifests itself in Neusser's studio library, containing books from Caspar David Friedrich to George Inness, and a drawer of neatly stacked vintage landscape postcards. He is not only a painter, but also a collector, meticulously investigating traditional landscape painting.

This investigation is also rooted in Neusser's own family history. In 1920, his grandmother, a young woman at the time, painted a scene of the family's Rhenish farm, featuring a watermill. The farm, with the entire village of Harff, was demolished in the 1970s (the decade the artist was born) to make way for strip mining.

The watermill painting became a stand-in for an idealized homeland, overlaid with family memories of a landscape that no longer exists.

Fruitlands/Windmill is thus one of the most personal of Neusser's responses. In it, he replaces the quaint, sandstone masonry watermill in the painting by William Rickaby Miller with bright white windmills, standing tall and hopeful in a field, offset by a brilliant blue sky. Both the subject and the sympathetic viewpoint of the mills are in alignment with Miller's work. The painting creates a scenic, human scale for windmills, which, when encountered in person, are intimidating, their stark height like skyscrapers. The clouds are arranged around the windmills like a banner framing the alluring future of energy sourcing. In seventeenth century painting, especially in Holland, wind- and watermills were omnipresent, demonstrating human expertise and technical skill. Replaced by the steam engine during the Industrial Revolution, they became a motif rife with nostalgia, still echoed in the oeuvre of the twentieth century with popular painters like Bob Ross and Thomas Kinkade, "painter of light."

Fruitlands/River also draws from Neusser's relationship to the Rhineland region. The painting *Drachenfels on the Rhine* by Worthington Whittredge is a precise, moody depiction of a castle ruin on a distant mountain

near Bonn. During the nineteenth century, this stretch of the Rhine, where the river valley narrows to dramatic effect, was a popular destination for tourists and artists alike. Whittredge was attracted to its romantic beauty, in company with artists such as Joseph Mallord William Turner and Lord Byron. *Fruitlands/River* looks south, just past the ruin, into the Rhine valley, marked today by a viewing platform for tourists. It is a counterview to Whittredge's painting, which looks north, but both paintings include Nonnenworth Island.

Abstraction is crucial to Neusser's making the subject matter his own. The upper half of the panel is a photo-realistic view of the river. The lower half is a steady streak of black paint, a screen of visual noise that, more than anything else, refers to its own materiality. It is an overt representation of the artistic mark, unlike Whittredge's subtle brushstrokes, and even contrary to Neusser's own mark-making in the upper half of the same painting. It reads as handmade, a glitch, interrupting the aerial view and alluding to the reflection made by a camera lens. The visibly overlaid brushstrokes offset the pictorial field, and yet

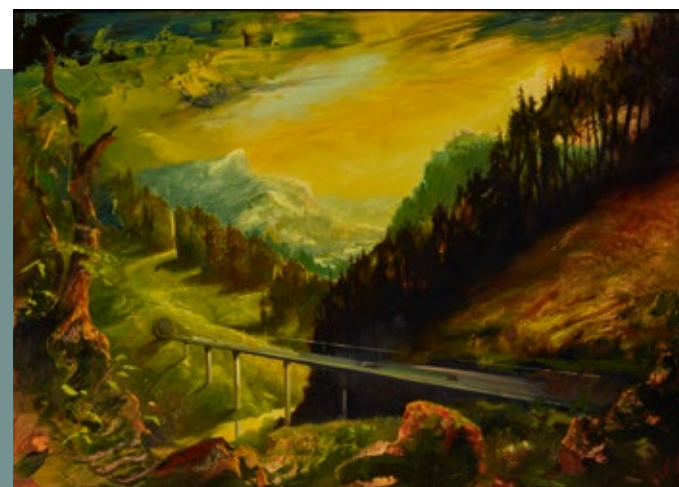
are integral parts of the composition. The resulting pictorial tension reminds us that the realistic parts of the painting are an illusion, fabricated by paint. The interruption to the view is also suggestive of digital interfaces that have the capacity to rob us of being present, as, for example, we might be tempted to look at the landscape through our camera phone rather than directly gaze at the view.

The balance of illusion and reality, representation and presence, can be applied to the distinction between appreciation of the land and national pride. Nineteenth-century romanticism contributed to toxic nationalism in twentieth-century Germany, and artists like Joseph Beuys and Anselm Kiefer grappled with that legacy in their art, seeking a way to heal and rebuild after ghastly tragedies fueled by fascism and two World Wars. Neusser acknowledges the complex history, both sociopolitical and art historical, with paintings that return to the romantic tradition. His works reference its influence on American art, communicate deep respect for the nineteenth-century artists, and meet many viewers at their expectations and guide them toward a more expansive perception.



In *Pastoral Present*, with one exception, Neusser's paintings do not hang right beside the works to which he responds. Viewers must shift their gaze from one to the other, one image slipping from view as they take in the other. Memory becomes a part of the juxtaposition. In *Fruitlands/Moon*, atmosphere becomes abstraction to a higher degree than in *Fruitlands/River*. It is a fascinating foil to its inspiration, *Moonlight* by John William Casilear, in terms of descriptive detail. Both intimate twilight scenes are dimly lit, nearly monochromatic, and vertically oriented. Neusser's *Moon* is a bright, yellow beacon in a twilight sky, its reflection upon water nearly as bright. The dark scrim we might assume are clouds reads as a foregrounding screen, a layer of paint past which we look to see the scene beyond. Casilear's painting is graciously detailed by comparison, prioritizing illusionistic space over the pictorial grid. Neusser's *Moon* balances representation and abstraction.

March of the Crusaders by George Inness provides a foundational example of many familiar aspects of landscape painting. It is an early work by the artist, conjuring his idea of the Italian countryside before he had yet traveled to Europe. In the background stand classical ruins, and soldiers in the uniforms of medieval crusaders traverse a bridge in the middle ground. To the mid-nineteenth century audience, this imagery already appeared of an earlier age. Neusser's response, *Fruitlands/Bridge*, mirrors *March of the Crusaders*'



composition with a bridge at the same angle, coursing across the picture. This bridge is a streamlined tube that could support a futuristic train. The trees are jagged and dark; the sky an ominous amber either of the gloaming hour or a forest fire.

In addition to academic paintings that are marvels of illusionism and imperceptible brushstrokes, other paintings in the collection, equally attractive, are by regionally recognized artists, executed in a flatter, more decorative style. An example is Thomas Chambers's *View of Mount Holyoke*, which hangs directly across the gallery from Regis François Gignoux's *Mountain Valley* in the *A New View* exhibition. The latter work is a feat of atmospheric painting, as much about the air as the geographic forms, yet both paintings represent the Connecticut River oxbow that was famously painted by Thomas Cole. Today a highway crosses right over the Connecticut River, and the curve that once formed the loop of the oxbow is separate from the main river. Neusser's painting, *Fruitlands/Interchange* glows with spring green like Chamber's, offering a similarly expansive, bird's eye view into the valley. Below, in place of the river, a highway path forms an infinity loop. A guard rail stands in the lower left corner, implying where a car might pull up to take in the view. As in *Fruitlands/Bridge*, the hard edges of the transportation infrastructure, made with sleek brushstrokes, completes the composition.



Representing the landscape with present-day utilitarian forms allows for a continuous view of the landscape through time. In New England, prior to highways, post roads facilitated travel from one region to the other. Post roads developed from paths traversed regularly by Indigenous people, and centuries prior to colonization, rivers were their primary thoroughfares.¹

Considering the aestheticization of landscape, a psychological relationship between humanity and the natural world deepens with the concept of indigeneity. “The process that brings anything to its current form—chemical, synthetic, technological, or otherwise—doesn’t make the product not a product of the living earth,” wrote Tommy Orange, who is Cheyenne and Arapaho, in *There There*.² This novel, published in the same year as this catalogue, begins with a grim, powerful prologue that is in effect a manifesto, about how Indigenous people need not just be associated with wild, rural, and remote places. “Plenty of us are urban now. If not because we live in cities, then because we live on the internet.”³ In this view, cities, their infrastructure, and manufactured objects are also nature. Allowing for this reality collapses time, and historic depictions are then not capturing something better, or more real.

In 1967, Robert Smithson wrote *Monuments of Passaic New Jersey*, an innovatively observant visit to the transit infrastructure of his home town. As he explored the highway, he photographed it. After acknowledging its primary function, to connect two counties, he referred to the highway as a monument, and related to it as an image. He spoke of the collapsing of time, inspired by incomplete construction:

*This is the opposite of the ‘romantic ruin’ because the buildings don’t fall into ruin after they are built but rather rise as ruins before they are built. This anti-romantic mise-en-scene suggests the discredited idea of time and many other “out of date” things.*⁴

Smithson posed the potential for a radical leveling of what might be subject to aesthetic consideration, a possibility facilitated by considering a two-dimensional view before the function of the thing being “read” as art. Neusser’s work accomplishes this, supporting expanded possibilities for engaging with historical representation of the land.

1. Thank you to Elizabeth James Perry, Aquinnah Wampanoag, for summing up this history in a conversation we had at just the right time.

2. Orange, Tommy. *There There*, New York: Vintage Books, 2019, 11.

3. *Ibid.* 9.

4. Smithson, Robert. “The Monuments of Passaic,” *Artforum*, December 1967, 52–57.



Paintings are informed by nature but are not real places. While they support an increased understanding of history, they are not mere windows to the past. At a museum whose collection focuses on the nineteenth century, we recognize and incorporate twentieth and twenty-first century culture in our approach. Our commitment to preservation is focused upon creative expression from throughout time.

Images in order of appearance in essay

Maria Neusser, *The Mill at Harff*, (detail), 1920, oil on panel, 15 × 20 inches, private collection, Cologne, Germany

Unknown photographer, *The Mill at Harff*, (detail), 1920s

Wilhelm Neusser, *Fruitlands/Windmill* (1902), (detail), 2019, oil on board, 19.25 × 26.75 inches

Wilhelm Neusser, *Windmills*, (detail), 2018, Archive.

Wilhelm Neusser, *Fruitlands/River* (1933), (detail), 2019, oil on paper/board, 18 × 24 inches

George Inness (1825–1894), *March of the Crusaders*, 1850, oil on canvas, 36 × 48.5 inches

Wilhelm Neusser, *Fruitlands/Bridge* (1904), (detail), 2019, oil on paper/board, 33 × 45 inches

Wilhelm Neusser, *Fruitlands/Interchange* (1949), (detail), 2019, oil on paper/board, 24 × 36 inches

Thomas Chambers (1808–1869), *View from Mount Holyoke*, ca. 1845, oil on canvas, 27.75 × 35.5 inches

Wilhelm Neusser, “ELSEWHERE provincial perspectives,” 2017, Goethe-Institute, Boston, exhibition view

Wilhelm Neusser, *Untitled/Landscape* (1913), (detail), 2019, oil on paper/board, 9 × 12 inches, private collection, MA



THE FRUITLANDS SERIES



William Rickerby Miller (1818–1893)
Old Mill by a Waterfall, ca. 1870
oil on canvas
22.5 × 29.5 inches



Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Windmill (1903), 2019
oil on paper/board
19.25 × 26.75 inches
Private collection, MA



Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Windmill (1901), 2019
oil on paper/board
19.25 × 26.75 inches



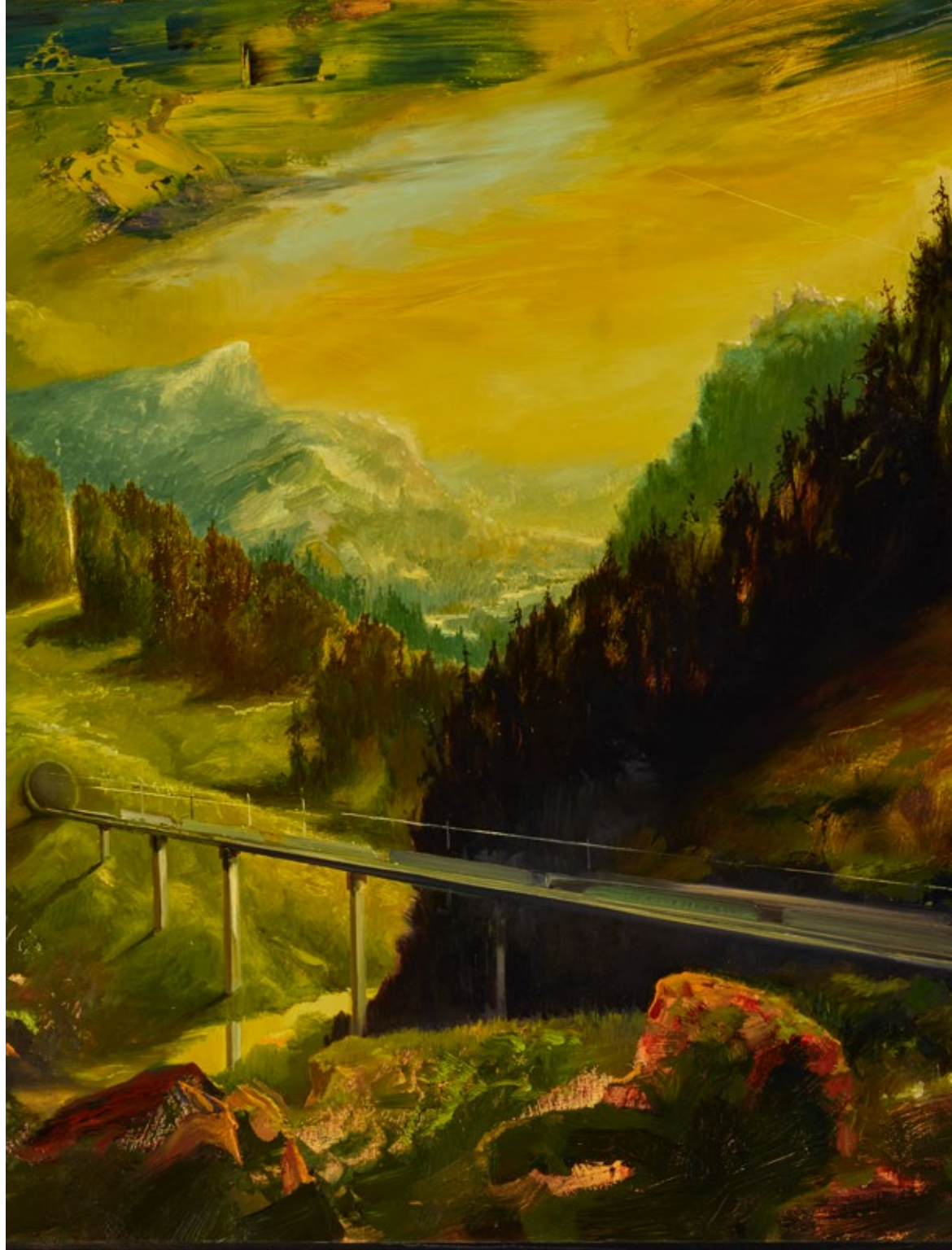
Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Windmill (1902), 2019
oil on paper/board
19.25 × 26.75 inches



George Inness (1825–1894)
March of the Crusaders, 1850
oil on canvas
36 × 48.5 inches



Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Bridge (1904), 2019
oil on paper/board
33 × 45 inches





Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Bridge (1943), 2019
oil on paper/board
33 × 45 inches



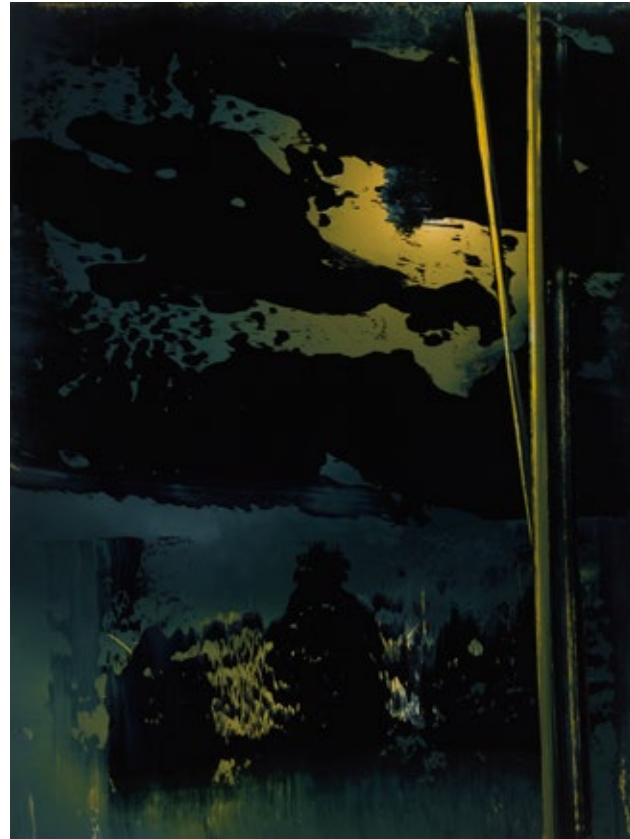
John William Casilear (1811–1893)
Moonlight, ca. 1880
oil on canvas
18.75 × 15.75 inches



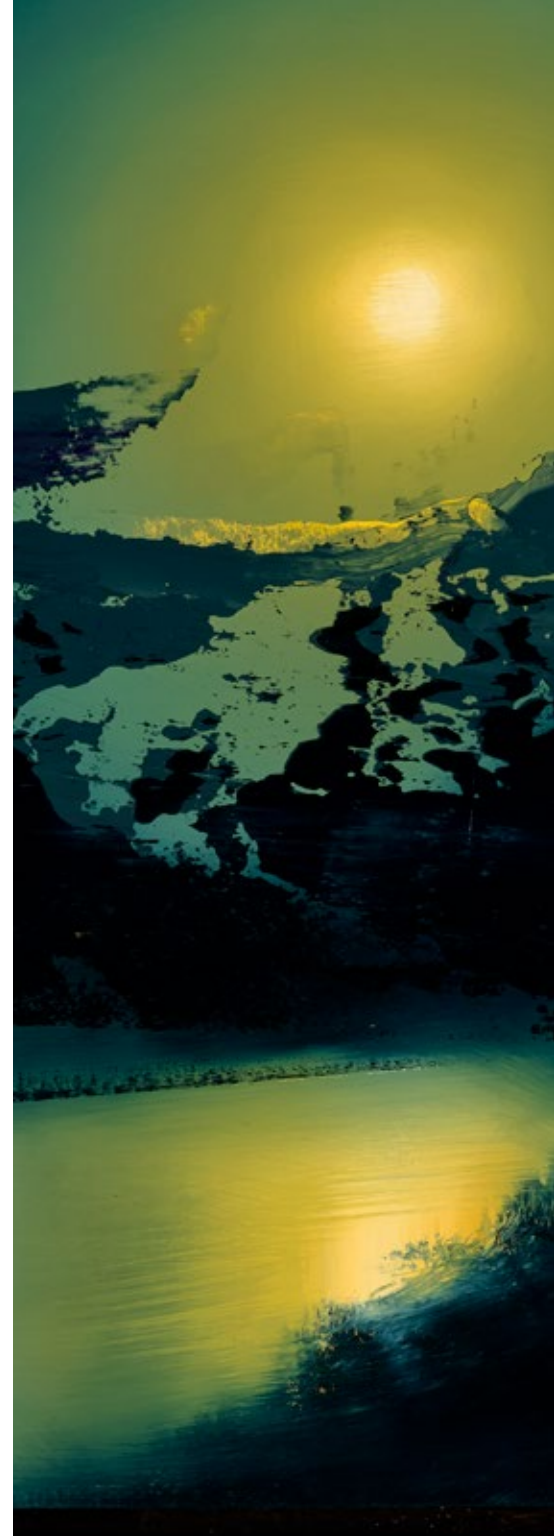
Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Moon (1946), 2019
oil on paper/board
16 × 12 inches

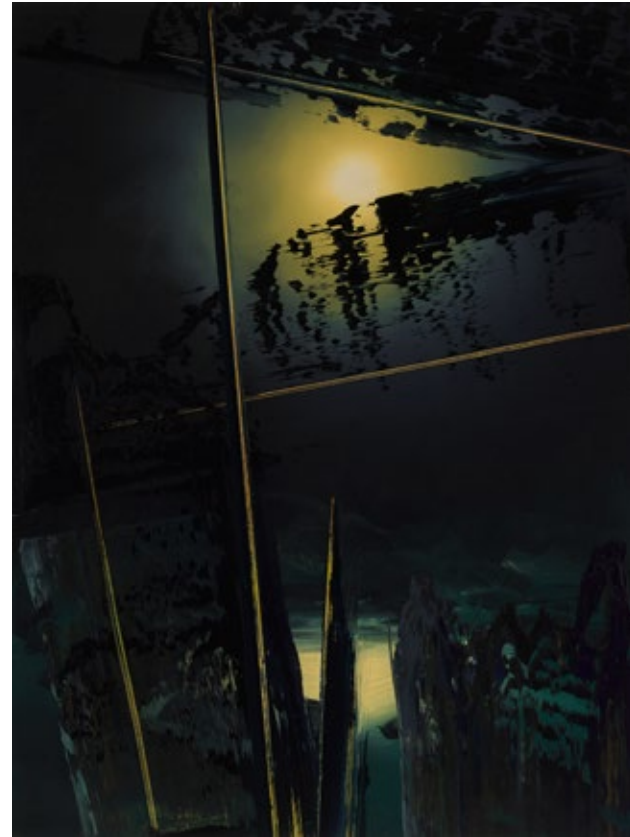


Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Moon (1944), 2019
oil on paper/board
16 × 12 inches

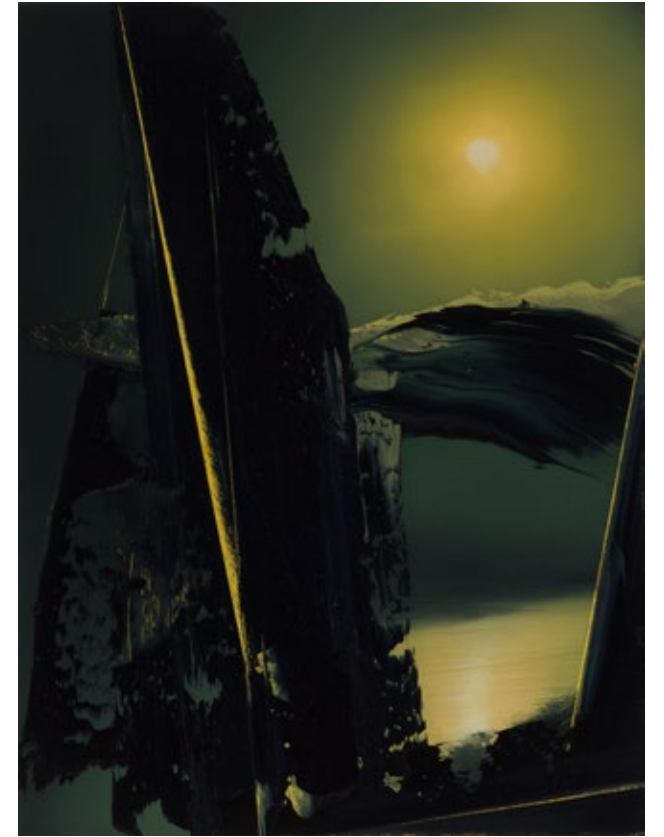


Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Moon (1947), 2019
oil on paper/board
16 × 12 inches





Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Moon (1945), 2019
oil on paper/board
16 × 12 inches



Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Moon (1948), 2019
oil on paper/board
16 × 12 inches



Worthington Whittredge (1820–1910)
Drachenfels on the Rhine, 1850
oil on canvas
15,5 × 22 inches



Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/River (1933), 2019
oil on paper/board
18 × 24 inches



Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/River (1934), 2019
oil on paper/board
18 x 24 inches



Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/River (1936), 2019
oil on paper/board
18 × 24 inches



Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/River (1935), 2019
oil on paper/board
18 × 24 inches





Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/River (1937), 2019
oil on paper/board
18 x 24 inches



Thomas Chambers (1808–1869)
View from Mount Holyoke, ca. 1845
oil on canvas
27.75 × 35.5 inches



Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Interchange (1949), 2019
oil on paper/board
24 × 36 inches



Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Interchange (1951), 2019
oil on paper/board
24 x 36 inches





Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Interchange (1950), 2019
oil on paper/board
24 × 36 inches



Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Interchange (1953), 2019
oil on paper/board
24 × 36 inches

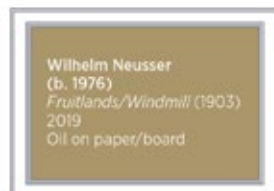
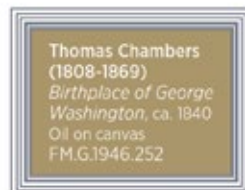


Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Interchange (1952), 2019
oil on paper/board
24 × 36 inches

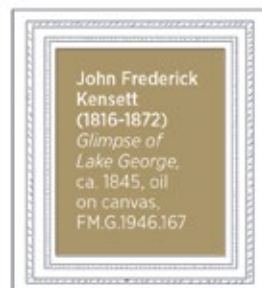
GALLERY MAPS

WALL 1

This wall map corresponds to the gallery installation photo on p.68

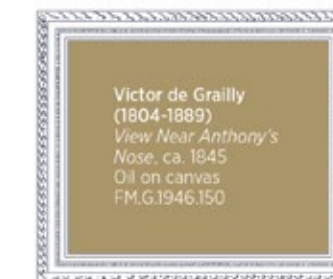
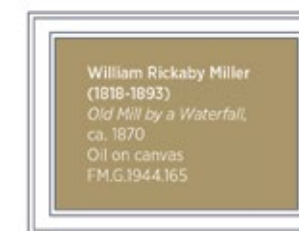


John William Casilear
(1811-1893)
Moonlight, ca. 1880
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1946.166



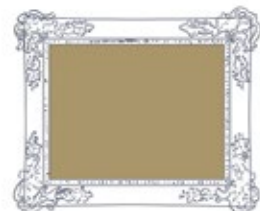
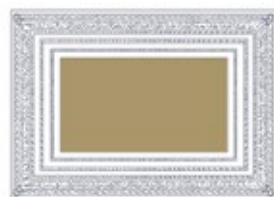
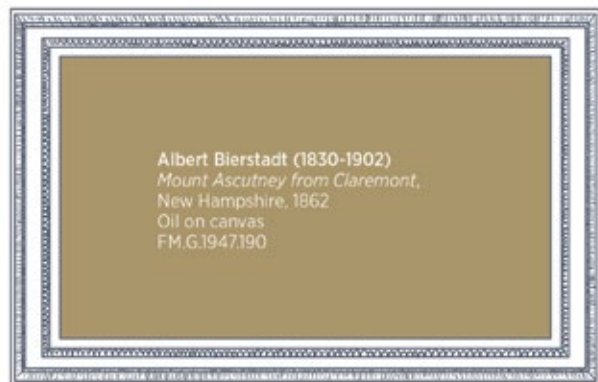
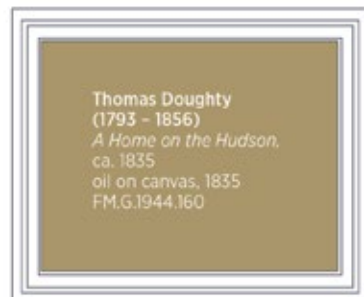
WALL 2

This wall map corresponds to the gallery installation photo on p.68



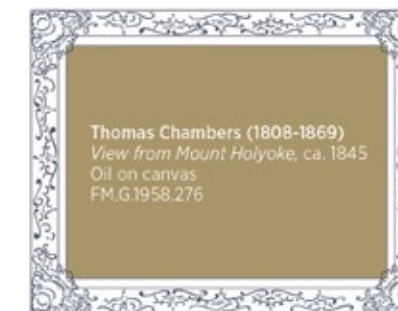
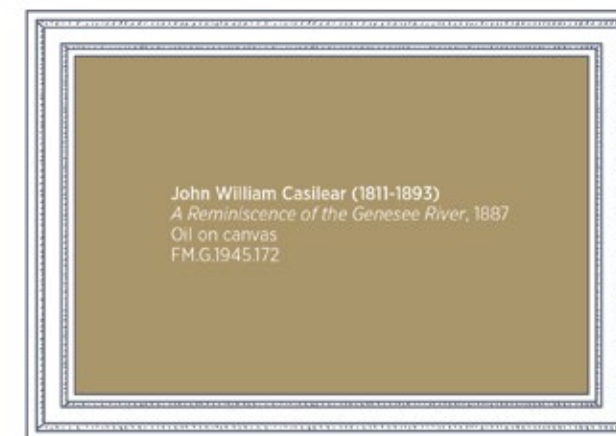
WALL 3

This wall map corresponds to the gallery installation photo on p.68–69



WALL 4

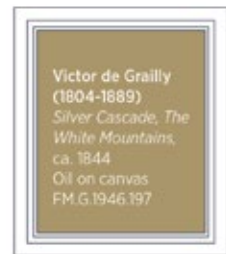
This wall map corresponds to the gallery installation photo on p.69





WALL 5

This wall map corresponds to the gallery installation photo on p.69



Victor de Grailly (1804-1889)
Silver Cascade, The White Mountains, ca. 1844
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1946.197



Thomas Doughty (1763-1856)
Summer in the Catskills, 1837
Oil on wood panel
FM.G.1944.179



Charles Codman (1800-1842)
The Wounded Deer, ca. 1840
Oil on panel
FM.G.1946.195



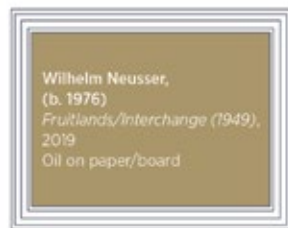
Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900)
Sunset in the Tropics, 1868
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1944.161



Octavia Porter (dates unknown)
Landscape, 1858
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1946.207



Artist Unknown
Landscape, 1890-1900
Oil on board
FM.G.1955.272
Gift of Mrs. Henry D. Love, 1955.



Wilhelm Neusser, (b. 1976)
Fruitlands/Interchange (1949), 2019
Oil on paper/board



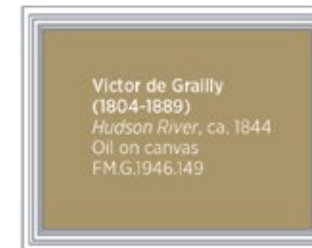
Christopher Pearse Cranch (1813-1892)
Landscape, River Running Between Pastures, ca. 1850
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1953.264

WALL 6

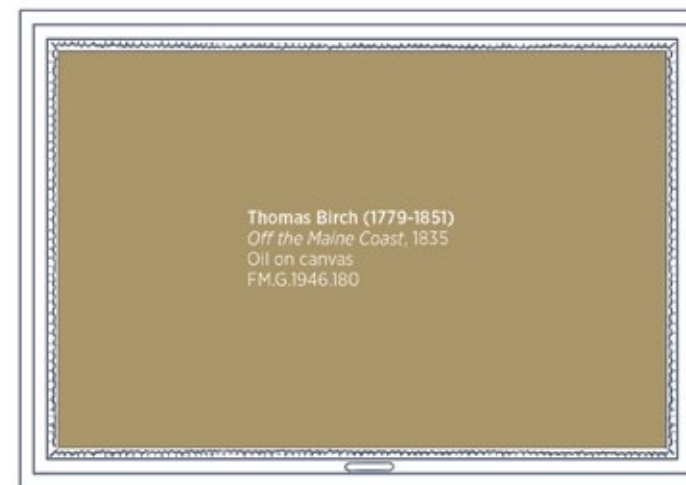
This wall map corresponds to the gallery installation photo on p.74



Robert Swain Gifford (1840-1905)
The Cedar Tree Pasture, ca. 1885
oil on canvas
FM.G.1963.279



Victor de Grailly (1804-1889)
Hudson River, ca. 1844
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1946.149



Thomas Birch (1779-1851)
Off the Maine Coast, 1835
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1946.180



Artist Unknown
Lake George, ca. 1860
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1999.354

WALL 7

This wall map corresponds to the gallery installation photo on p.74-75



Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902)
San Rafael, California, ca. 1875
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1944.185



Sanford Robinson Gifford (1823-1890)
Valley Sunset, 1860
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1986.309



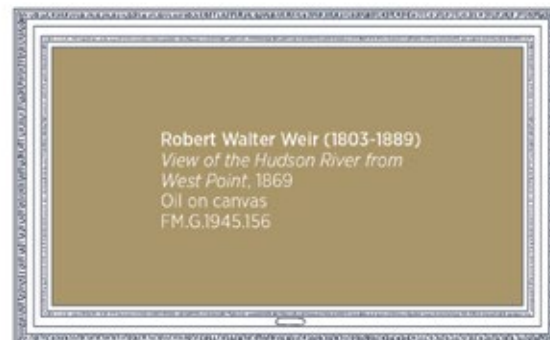
John White Allen Scott (1815-1907)
Old Covered Wagon, 1883
Oil on canvas board
FM.G.1942.155



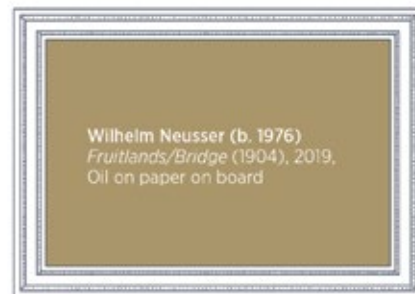
Amasa Hewins (1785-1855)
Landscape of Italy, 1837
Oil on board
FM.G.1980.305



Thomas Birch (1779-1851)
Upper Hudson, 1828
Oil on wood panel
FM.G.1944.170



Robert Walter Weir (1803-1889)
View of the Hudson River from West Point, 1869
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1945.156



Wilhelm Neusser (b. 1976)
Fruitlands/Bridge (1904), 2019
Oil on paper on board



Worthington Whittredge (1820-1910)
Drachenfels on the Rhine, 1850
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1946.176



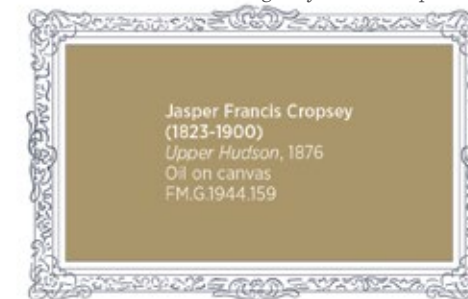
Charles Codman (1800-1842)
The Hayfield, 1832
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1946.169

WALL 8

This wall map corresponds to the gallery installation photo on p.75



William Louis Sonntag (1822-1900)
Mountain Scene with Stream, 1881
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1955.271



Jasper Francis Cropsey (1823-1900)
Upper Hudson, 1876
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1944.159



Victor de Grailly (1804-1889)
Monument to Kosciuszko at West Point, 1844
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1948.152



Wilhelm Neusser (b. 1976)
Fruitlands/Moon (1946), 2019
Oil on paper/board



Régis François Gignoux (1816-1882)
Mountain Valley, ca. 1850
Oil on canvas
FM.G.1947.187



AREA OF RESCUE ASSISTANCE
EXIT



7

8



TESTING GROUND

WILHELM NEUSSER

Growing up in the countryside, in a coal-mining region in western Germany, I experienced landscape as both agriculture and industry. The area is flat, marked by freeways and rows of poplar trees, sunsets behind power plants behind endless fields of sugar beets. One of Europe's biggest open strip mines keeps the terrain in constant transformation, moving streets and rivers, tearing down villages and relocating inhabitants nearby. New histories are written into the soil, while memories of place and home are projected onto a massive hole. Progress and nostalgia go hand-in-hand.

Such formative impressions continue to affect and define my own artistic practice and my commitment to landscape painting. I feel particularly drawn to the 19th century, in which both tendencies – the processing of progress and yearning for an idyllic past – are simultaneously present. From the literal steam train cutting through an Arcadian vista to the metaphorical mood of twilight announcing the dawn of a new age, the notion of change is ubiquitous. Almost two centuries later we are still changing, facing a multitude of challenges, from environmental to global to digital. Landscape is a testing ground for our mental state, drawn taut between past, present, and future.

Wilhelm Neusser
Untitled/Landscape (1912), (detail), 2019
oil on paper/board
9 × 12 inches
Private collection, MA



Wilhelm Neusser
Untitled/Landscape (1917), 2019
oil on paper/board
9 × 12 inches



Wilhelm Neusser
Goethe#2/Bus Stop (1712), 2017
oil on paper
86 × 27 inches
Private collection, MA



Wilhelm Neusser
Untitled/Landscape (1921), 2019
oil on paper/board
9 x 12 inches



Wilhelm Neusser
Untitled/Landscape (1912), 2019
oil on paper/board
9 x 12 inches
Private collection, MA



Wilhelm Neusser
Untitled/Landscape (1913), 2019
oil on paper/board
9 x 12 inches
Private collection, MA



Wilhelm Neusser
Goethe#13/Mailbox (1723), 2017
oil on paper
80 × 34 inches

Wilhelm Neusser
Goethe#8/Street Sign (1718), 2017
oil on paper
80.5 × 42.5 inches

WORKS in the catalogue

By Wilhelm Neusser

All sizes are listed as height × width in inches

Wilhelm Neusser
Goethe#2/Bus Stop (1712), 2017
oil on paper
86 × 27
Private collection, MA

Wilhelm Neusser
Goethe#8/Street Sign (1718), 2017
oil on paper
80.5 × 42.5

Wilhelm Neusser
Goethe#13/Mailbox (1723), 2017
oil on paper
80 × 34

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Windmill (1901), 2019
oil on paper/board
19.25 × 26.75

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Windmill (1902), 2019
oil on paper/board
19.25 × 26.75

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Windmill (1903), 2019
oil on paper/board
19.25 × 26.75
Private collection, MA

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Bridge (1904), 2019
oil on paper/board
33 × 45

Wilhelm Neusser
Untitled/Landscape (1912), 2019
oil on paper/board
9 × 12
Private collection, MA

Wilhelm Neusser
Untitled/Landscape (1913), 2019
oil on paper/board
9 × 12
Private collection, MA

Wilhelm Neusser
Untitled/Landscape (1917), 2019
oil on paper/board
9 × 12

Wilhelm Neusser
Untitled/Landscape (1918), 2019
oil on paper/board
9 × 12

Wilhelm Neusser
Untitled/Landscape (1921), 2019
oil on paper/board
9 × 12

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/River (1933), 2019
oil on paper/board
18 × 24

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/River (1934), 2019
oil on paper/board
18 × 24

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/River (1935), 2019
oil on paper/board
18 × 24

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/River (1936), 2019
oil on paper/board
18 × 24

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/River (1937), 2019
oil on paper/board
18 × 24

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Bridge (1943), 2019
oil on paper/board
33 × 45

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Moon (1944), 2019
oil on paper/board
16 × 12

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Moon (1945), 2019
oil on paper/board
16 × 12

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Moon (1946), 2019
oil on paper/board
16 × 12

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Moon (1947), 2019
oil on paper/board
16 × 12

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Moon (1948), 2019
oil on paper/board
16 × 12

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Interchange (1949), 2019
oil on paper/board
24 × 36

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Interchange (1950), 2019
oil on paper/board
24 × 36

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Interchange (1951), 2019
oil on paper/board
24 × 36

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Interchange (1952), 2019
oil on paper/board
24 × 36

Wilhelm Neusser
Fruitlands/Interchange (1953), 2019
oil on paper/board
24 × 36

Permanent Collection

All sizes framed, height × width in inches. For captions to paintings in installation views, please see the gallery maps p. 62–75.

Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902)
Mount Ascutney from Claremont, New Hampshire, 1862
oil on canvas
40.5 × 70.5
FM.G.1947.190

John William Casilear (1811–1893)
Moonlight, ca. 1880
oil on canvas
18.75 × 15.75
FM.G.1946.166

Thomas Chambers (1808–1869)
View from Mount Holyoke, ca. 1845
oil on canvas
27.75 × 35.5
FM.G.1958.276

Frederic Edwin Church (1826–1900)
Sunset in the Tropics, 1868
oil on canvas
27 × 42
FM.G.1944.161

Christopher Pearse Cranch (1813–1892)
River Running Between Pastures, ca. 1850
oil on canvas
24.75 × 30.75
FM.G.1953.264

Asher B. Durand (1796–1886)
North Mountain Reservation, Essex County, New Jersey
oil on canvas
23 × 30.25 inches
FM.G.1944.177

Sanford Robinson Gifford (1823–1880)
Valley Sunset, 1860
oil on canvas
19 × 17
FM.G.1986.309

Régis François Gignoux (1816–1882)
Mountain Valley, ca. 1850
oil on canvas
42 × 54
FM.G.1947.187

George Inness (1825–1894)
March of the Crusaders, 1850
oil on canvas
36 × 48.5
FM.G.1944.175

John Frederick Kensett (1816–1872)
In the Catskills, ca. 1860
oil on canvas
27 × 25.25
FM.G.1944.171

William Rickerby Miller (1818–1893)
Old Mill by a Waterfall, ca. 1870
oil on canvas
22.5 × 29.5
FM.G.1944.165

Octavia Porter (dates unknown)
Landscape, 1858
oil on canvas
21.75 × 27.75
FM.G.1946.207

Worthington Whittredge (1820–1910)
Drachenfels on the Rhine, 1850
oil on canvas
15.5 × 22
FM.G.1946.176



Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902)
Mount Ascutney from Claremont, New Hampshire, 1862
oil on canvas
40.5 × 70.5 inches

Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the kind support of John Laupheimer.

We would like to thank the Trustees Exhibitions Committee and all of the Fruitlands Museum site staff for their support of this exhibition.

Thank you to Molly Phelps for her first-rate assistance executing the exhibition A New View: Landscapes from the Permanent Collection in 2017. We recognize Lisa Dagdigian, Sheila Simolardes, Helen Batchelder, and all of the Fruitlands Museum Interpreters for their devotion to this collection.

Michael Busack, Director

Shana Dumont Garr, Curator, Fruitlands Museum, *Exhibition Curator*

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Stewart Clements, Photographer

Julia Featheringill, Photographer

Nikki Steeprock, Gallery Map Design

Hannah Costner, Catalogue Designer

Frederic Edwin Church (1826–1900)

Sunset in the Tropics, (detail), 1868

oil on canvas

27 × 42 inches





SHANA DUMONT GARR | Curator, Fruitlands Museum, *Exhibition Curator*

Shana Dumont Garr is the Curator of Fruitlands Museum, where she brings a multi-faceted lens to New England history with contemporary art. Her previous positions include the Director of Programs and Exhibitions at Artspace in Raleigh, NC, where she curated several contemporary art exhibitions including *Redefining Ritual*, Assistant to the Director at the Ackland Art Museum, Chapel Hill, NC, and Assistant Curator, Assistant Director at Montserrat College of Art Galleries, Beverly, MA. Garr earned a M.A. in Art History from Boston University and a B.A. in English and Art from Colby College in Waterville, ME.

WILHELM NEUSSER | Artist

Wilhelm Neusser was born in Cologne, Germany. He studied at the Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Karlsruhe. After his studies, Neusser lived and worked in Cologne until his relocation to the United States in 2011. He has received numerous fellowships and awards and his work has been widely exhibited in the U.S. and Europe, most recently at the Goethe Institute Boston, MASS MoCA and the Rijksmuseum. Neusser lives and works in Somerville, MA

ERIN CORRALES-DIAZ, PH.D. | Assistant Curator of American Art, Worcester Art Museum

Erin R. Corrales-Diaz is the assistant curator of American art at the Worcester Art Museum. Before coming to Worcester, Corrales-Diaz held dual posts as Curator of the Johnson Collection and Visiting Scholar at Wofford and Converse Colleges in Spartanburg, South Carolina. She is a specialist in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American art with a particular focus on art of the American Civil War and African American art. Corrales-Diaz received her doctorate from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and master's from Williams College.

Christopher Pearse Cranch (1813–1892)
River Running Between Pastures, (detail), ca. 1850
oil on canvas
24.75 × 30.75



Fruitlands
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