Image and Identity: The Art of William E. Scott, John W. Hardrick, and Hale A. Woodruff
by Harriet G. Warkel

William Edouard Scott

In 1915, almost ten years before the scholar and philosopher Alain Locke called for "a school of racial art" focusing on African-American subjects, William Edouard Scott was preparing to leave for Tuskegee, Alabama, to study southern life among his people. Scott's interest in African-American subject matter was enhanced by his association with Henry O. Tanner, whose formidable reputation made him a mentor to many African Americans studying in France. Scott met Tanner on his first trip to France in 1909, and the two developed a close friendship.

The work Scott produced abroad focused on French genre scenes, with a particular emphasis on peasant life. There is a poignancy to his images, a reflection of the artist's empathy with his subject. *La Pauvre Voisine (The Poor Neighbor)* (fig. 1), executed in 1912 while Scott was a student at the Académie Julian and accepted in the Paris Salon the same year, is reminiscent of Tanner's *The Thankful Poor*, 1894. His mentor's influence is again apparent in *Breton Smithy*, about 1913 (fig. 2), which has its roots in Tanner's *The Young Sabot Maker*, 1895. Scott was inspired by Tanner's subject matter, palette, modified impressionist technique, subdued tonalities, and dramatic lighting.

*Rainy Night, Etaples*, 1912 (fig. 3), and *La Misère*, 1913 (fig. 4), depict the area around Tanner's summer home near Etaples in Normandy. Tanner's influence is evident in the style and tone of *Rainy Night*, a loosely brushed and spontaneous composition demonstrating the restrained impressionist technique that dominated Scott's European paintings. Here the scene is almost completely shrouded in darkness, except for rays of light emanating from two street lamps and an occasional window. The shadowy figures in the foreground are set against an incandescent illumination and a glistening wet pavement. Scott skillfully draws the viewer's eye into the composition by placing a horse-drawn carriage in the distance. This carriage, a symbol of wealth, forms the apex of a triangle whose base joins the two groups of figures clutching umbrellas on either side of the composition. The artist structures this work in a classical manner, then loosens his brush strokes to give the scene an elusive quality.

The style of *La Misère* contrasts with the freely brushed technique of *Rainy Night*. The buildings are solid, sturdy structures lit by bright sunlight. Even the shadows cut across the scene with a crisp angularity. Set against this rigidity are figures of a mother and child in the street and a man sprawled in the doorway. These images serve as symbols of the poverty of French peasant life. The horse-drawn carriage in the background again alludes to a more affluent society just beyond the reach of the foreground figures.

When Scott returned to America in 1914, he was solidly grounded in the French academic tradition. He had joined the legions of American artists who studied in the French academies and sought advanced training in the ateliers of Parisian artists. For the African-American artist, Paris meant a freedom and acceptance not found at home, an opportunity to study and exhibit freely with other painters. Scott had become an internationally recognized artist whose works were shown at the Paris Salon and the Royal Academy in London. He was trained not only in the European academies, but also by the most respected African-American artist of his day. This combined influence was to manifest itself in Scott's pursuit of black subject matter and would remain a constant force in his art.

By 1915 Scott had attained a formidable reputation as a talented African-American artist. When he set out for his trip to Tuskegee, Alabama, the distinguished educator and founder of Tuskegee Institute, Booker T. Washington, invited him to be his guest. Washington was a strong advocate of utilitarian education and manual training as a means of advancement for African Americans. His views were supported by white sponsors, and he was often accused of...
Haiti, who still maintained their African heritage, would be perfect subjects for his paintings. Scott was asked to illustrate several covers for The Crisis, the magazine of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). William E. B. Dubois, who was the editor of The Crisis and the founder of the NAACP in 1909, commissioned a painting from Scott for the Easter 1918 issue of the magazine. Traveling (fig. 8), also known as Lead Kindly Light (fig. 9), is one of Scott's most poignant images. The inspiration for this painting was the artist's grandparents, who traveled by ox cart from North Carolina to Indianapolis in 1847. Here two figures are huddled together in their wagon. The man steering his oxen toward an uncertain future supports his weary wife's head on his shoulder. The light from the lantern gives the painting its title. Whether the couple were driven from their home or are moving voluntarily is left to the viewer's imagination, but desperation and apprehension are clearly evident on their faces. Scott and Dubois used the celebration of the resurrection as an opportunity to emphasize the difficult situation facing blacks in America and their constant search for a better life.

Although Scott had a special interest in genre scenes portraying the black experience, portraiture and mural painting were his principal livelihood. In The Crisis Advertiser of 1919, Scott ran an ad offering to paint portraits from photographs, particularly of "your son or your brother who is 'over there',' referring to the soldiers serving abroad in the years after World War I.

Yet Scott's success as an artist does not lie in commissions from such advertisements. It is his more than thirty portraits of prominent African Americans, including his famous paintings of Washington and Carver, that helped to make Scott a leading black artist. Among these historic portraits is a posthumous painting of abolitionist Frederick Douglass (fig. 10), shown in a pensive profile as if the burden of the world were on his shoulders. Scott depicts Douglass, with white hair and beard, in the latter part of his life, probably between 1871 and 1891. During this period Douglass served as territorial legislator of the District of Columbia, recorder of deeds, and consul general to the Republic of Haiti. Scott captures the essence of this strong-willed leader, who was instrumental in convincing President Abraham Lincoln that African Americans should be allowed to fight against slavery as soldiers in the Civil War.

In 1931 Scott received a Julius Rosenwald Fellowship to study Negro types in the West Indies. The artist sailed for Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on March 13 to paint the inhabitants of the first black republic in the Americas. Scott wanted to record the domestic life and customs of a people he believed lived in an unspoiled environment. He felt certain the people of Haiti, who still maintained their African heritage, would be perfect subjects for his paintings.
Scott painted over 144 works while in Haiti. Typically he traveled to the Haitian countryside, made sketches of people or scenery, and then returned to his studio to complete the painting. The artist used a vibrant palette in his Haitian paintings, eliminating the subdued, limited tonalities and dramatic lighting of his European canvases. Haiti's local color and bright sunlight captivated the artist, who enjoyed the spirit of peasant life and his daily contact with the people. The inspiration Scott derived from painting Haitian subjects remained with him throughout his life, as he returned again and again to his Haitian experiences to express his love for his people. A Haitian critic commented on Scott's keen understanding of Haitian culture: "In our country for just eight months, Mr. Scott has analyzed and studied it thoroughly. Crossing all the island from Kenscoff to the Cape, passing by La Citadelle, the painter has taken his rich palette." Scott painted numerous scenes of daily life in Haiti, concentrating mainly on the poorer classes of people. The artist felt their features, dress, customs, and directness lent to his paintings a vigor not found among the upper-class Haitians.

Although almost all Haitians are baptized as Roman Catholics, the peasants practice Vodun, a religion blending African beliefs with elements of Catholicism. Scott painted a series of canvases depicting Haitians going to church to attend confirmation ceremonies. These paintings show a young girl dressed in white seated on a donkey. A woman walking beside the animal holds a pair of shoes, probably borrowed for the occasion. In most of these depictions a man, dressed in a white suit, stands in the background. The expense of purchasing shoes and clothing plus the time required to participate in the formalities of religious ceremonies often deter Haitians from a full commitment to Roman Catholic ritual. Most peasant families cannot afford the time away from the tasks necessary to maintain their daily existence. Scott's paintings are filled with details of the customs, conditions, and lifestyles of the Haitian people, and are valuable accounts of this black republic, recorded with an eye for truth and a taste for the exotic.

A very popular Sunday afternoon sport for Haitian men is the cockfight. The event is held under a shelter in the organizer's backyard. Scott's Cockfight (fig. 12) focuses on the man responsible for rubbing down the birds between rounds. In the distance the spectators, with their backs toward the viewer, stand on a platform watching the match. Scott divides his canvas between anticipation and action but keeps the actual fight hidden from view behind the crowd of spectators. Here the artist's limited palette, strong contrasts of light and dark, and tightly enclosed space recall his French academic training and the work of Tanner. The scene, however, is animated by the rhythmic lines of the figures in the background and the birds positioned carefully in the foreground to lead the viewer around the canvas.

One of the most important landmarks in Haiti is the Citadel, built as a fortress by Henry Cristophe, who crowned himself king of Haiti in 1811. Designed to counter any military attacks, the Citadel was already a major tourist attraction when the artist arrived in Haiti. Scott's The Citadel, Haiti (fig. 13) shows the fortress looming in the distance, a striking contrast to the foreground boat sailing on the tranquil waters and the Haitian people performing their daily chores. The calm scene is far removed from the battles Christophe was preparing to fight to keep Napoleon from reclaiming Haiti and from the splendid court life in his castle near the Citadel. The Citadel became Christophe's tomb after he fell out of favor and committed suicide in 1820. At the time Scott was in Haiti, the country was under direct United States rule. American troops were withdrawn from the island in 1934, two years after the artist left the republic. In Scott's painting, the Citadel stands as a symbol of independence and a reminder of the country's past.

The Haitian markets were Scott's favorite subject. These markets, managed by Haitian women while the men worked the fields, are the spirit of Haitian life. Scott's Turkey Vendor (fig. 14) vividly displays the local color of these busy centers. Here a woman balances two birds on her head and carries several others. Her nonchalant expression is punctuated by a pipe dangling from her mouth. Haitian Market, 1950 (fig. 15), also captures the crowded atmosphere and inherent exoticism of the island's markets. The classical columns in its architectural backdrop add an element of grandeur and solidity to the bustling scene. Scott's sense of harmony and organization, derived from his academic training, are essential elements in the success of his market views. The artist's tenure at the French academies taught him how to make unity out of chaos, but Scott's stay in Haiti added a richness of color and texture missing from his European scenes.

In Haiti women are often accompanied to the market by their youngest children. Haitian families are usually large, but each child is considered a gift from God. In Mother and Child (fig. 16) the baby's head is nestled in its mother's neck. The bond between the two is enhanced by Scott's use of white for both the baby's blanket and the woman's blouse. A building and background trees halt any recession into depth, forcing the viewer to concentrate on the figures. The young mother's intense expression and her powerful presence display the energy and determination characteristic of Haitian women.

Scott's figure studies of the old men and women of Haiti demonstrate his ability to render the essential character of the Haitian people. His elderly subjects, with their deeply furrowed brows, are vividly expressive of years of hard work in the hot sun under difficult conditions. The strength, resilience, and determination of the Haitian peasants is summed up in works such as Blind Sister Mary (fig. 17) and Kenskoff, Haiti (fig. 18), two of Scott's portraits of a people who endure their...
African-American artists of the Harlem Renaissance. He epitomized the themes advocated by Alain Locke long before it fully deserved."

At the time of these commissions the artist was working on portraits of Julius Rosenwald, two judges, and ten Chicago doctors, and a life-size portrait of Haitian President Stanio Vincent, which was sent to the city of Port-au-Prince.

Any attempt at depicting the Haitian people would have been incomplete without a representation of their liberator, Toussaint L’Ouverture, who in 1791 led Haiti’s slaves to a victory against the French. Scott's painting of this former slave (fig. 21) shows him in complete control of his small civilian army and preparing to lead the rebellion. L’Ouverture’s drawn sword points in the direction of the confrontation, but his left arm is raised toward his followers, directing the viewer back to the multitude of former slaves with their crude weapons poised for battle. The work brings to mind Eugene Delacroix’s Liberty Leading the People, July 18, 1830, (fig. 22). In both paintings the central figure is set apart from the rest of the scene. Liberty’s gaze backward to the throng of people is similar to L’Ouverture's gesture toward the mass of humanity waiting to follow his lead. Scott creates his own brand of agitation, anticipation, and excitement, capturing the same sense of drama found in Delacroix’s spectacle.

After Scott moved back to Chicago in 1932, he continued to paint Haitian scenes but also returned to murals and portraits. In April 1934 he executed a life-size portrait of Abraham Lincoln and his son Tad for the Cook County Juvenile Court in Chicago. That same year he was commissioned to do a mural for a Chicago funeral home to commemorate its eighth anniversary. Scott also completed three religious murals for St. Paul’s A.M.E. Church in Glencoe, Illinois. At the time of these commissions the artist was working on portraits of Julius Rosenwald, two judges, and ten Chicago doctors, and a life-size portrait of Haitian President Stanio Vincent, which was sent to the city of Port-au-Prince.

Between 1935 and the 1950s Scott completed thirty murals for the field houses in the Chicago park district and forty murals for Chicago churches. In 1942 he was one of seven winners in a nationwide competition to paint murals for the Recorder of Deeds building in Washington, D.C. In a letter to Scott informing him of his selection, Edward B. Rowan, Assistant Chief of the Section of Fine Arts, Washington, D.C., noted, "Your design was chosen on the basis of the sincerity with which you depicted both Lincoln and Douglass, and the spirit of reality that you succeeded in putting into the setting." His work Frederick Douglass Appealing to President Lincoln and His Cabinet to Enlist Negroes was finished in 1943. Upon its completion Scott was commissioned to paint a mural commemorating the dedication of the Recorder of Deeds building, which was installed in 1944. Here Scott placed the figure of President Roosevelt, who presided over the ceremonies, within a bright sunlit triangle that the artist hoped "would add interest and color" to the composition. Scott was adhering to his academic training, which taught him to organize the figures within a triangular arrangement. Instead of idealizing his figures as academicians would advocate, however, Scott used numerous photographs to create a realistic depiction of his subjects.

During the 1950s Pope Pius XII consecrated the first black bishops of the Roman Catholic Church. To celebrate this event, Scott painted Pope Pius XII and Two Bishops, about 1953 (fig. 23). The pope, in his white vestments, is centrally positioned above the bishops. His triangular-shaped miter extends to the edge of the canvas, emphasizing his stature and power. The unadorned, geometrical background and the painting's triangular composition recall the style of Renaissance portraiture. Scott's positioning of the three bishops clearly suggests the trinity, symbolizing unity in diversity. This painting, a key work in Scott's career, not only epitomizes classical tenets, but also expresses the artist's vision of the future of race relations.

In 1955 Scott visited Mexico City with the intention of painting the area and its people. He completed several canvases during his visit, but while there he discovered he had diabetes. Although he was eventually confined to a wheelchair and developed problems with his vision toward the end of his life, the artist continued to paint until his death in 1964. Throughout his life Scott stayed within the realist tradition of Thomas Eakins and Winslow Homer. He neither followed the trend toward abstraction nor used African imagery in his art, as some of the younger African-American artists were doing. Scott steadfastly adhered to traditional methods of painting. In the introduction to a brochure produced for an exhibition of Scott's work in 1970, the writer noted, "His paintings seem tepid now that the aesthetic credos under which he operated have been superseded, but he was a master of his craft in the context of his time, and the recognition accorded him was fully deserved."

While Scott adhered to the precepts of the European academic tradition, he is considered one of the most outstanding African-American artists of the Harlem Renaissance. He epitomized the themes advocated by Alain Locke long before it...
became stylish to paint the black experience. Scott's goal was to persuade African-American artists to look at the world around them and to recognize the wealth of subject matter within their own communities.

John Wesley Hardrick

John Hardrick. Just remember the name, will you, please? And when in the distant future I turn about and say, "I told you so!" you may accuse me of having peculiar psychic powers, or whatever else you will. I can't quite explain why I have done so -- perhaps just because I have a feeling in my bones that it will be -- but I have put John Hardrick's name down in my little memorandum book as the name of a future great artist. 

Lucille Morehouse, the art critic for The Indianapolis Star, saw in John Wesley Hardrick a young man of exceptional talent. She wrote the above critique on the occasion of a 1913 exhibition that included students from the John Herron School of Art. Hardrick was then twenty-one years old and had been attending the art school for almost three years. The young artist's goal at that time was to study under one of the world's masters. But Hardrick married young, and his family grew quickly, leaving him unable to take advantage of the opportunities he was offered to study abroad. Hardrick remained in Indianapolis, painting the landscape and the people around him. The artist's distinctive impressionist style made him one of the city's prominent landscape painters, and his skill in capturing appearance and personality made him a sought-after portraitist.

Hardrick's landscapes are derived from the many trips he took to Brown County, about fifty miles south of Indianapolis. He traveled to the area at the peak of the autumn season, when the leaves were at the height of their color; during the summer, when the sun was bright and hot; and in the winter, when the ground was covered with snow. He did not sketch or paint during these visits. Instead, the artist took in the different scenes and committed them to memory. Over the years Hardrick called upon these mental images to paint numerous landscapes enhanced by an exquisite sense of color and a strong feel for nature. There is often a pattern to these landscapes that includes a meandering road or stream surrounded by dense foliage and heightened by blue sky and billowing white clouds. Hardrick's landscapes are in the tradition of the Hoosier Group, five Indiana artists who worked in an impressionist style around the turn of the century. The young artist primarily followed in the footsteps of his teacher at the John Herron School of Art, William Forsyth, a prominent member of the Hoosier Group. Hardrick was particularly influenced by Forsyth's paintings of twisting roads flanked by autumn landscapes.

Although the Hoosier impressionists were Hardrick's main influences, he also admired Auguste Renoir, Edgar Degas, and the post-impressionists Vincent van Gogh and Paul Gauguin. Hardrick was inspired by Renoir's brilliant, sensuous hues and his placement of women among flowers and foliage. In Degas he found the inspiration for his delicate pastel landscapes. Hardrick was most attracted to the expressive quality of color in the work of Gauguin and van Gogh and to the latter's bold use of impasto.

Hardrick applied his paint very thickly, using a palette knife to create a tactile surface. He relied on a brush only to blend or add a shape, and used his thumb to mold the paint as if he were shaping sculpture.

When painting a landscape, Hardrick liked to work quickly in order to maintain a feeling of spontaneity. He generally arose early to begin work on "a landscape composition which he had visualized the night before.... The picture was so definitely in mind with regard to its general form and color that the artist started to work on it without eating breakfast. And he kept putting his dream of a lovely landscape into material form and color until it was finished shortly before noon." Starting at the top of his canvas, the artist would begin with the sky, overlapping his paint as he worked toward the foreground. Hardrick disliked returning to his painting or reworking it, so he rarely spent more than two days on a landscape. He rendered them with ease and confidence, adding a significant amount of imagination to his memories of Brown County.

Charles Wharton, a young Indianapolis artist who watched Hardrick paint landscapes in 1954, noted: "In order to endow his paintings with feeling, Hardrick became one with his landscape, experiencing the rustle of the trees as he painted, the warm sunlight or the cold, wet snow. He lived inside each canvas making it his total existence." Hardrick pursued endless variations of atmosphere and light effects. Stimulated by the Brown County countryside, the artist arranged and rearranged his actual experiences to create sensuous views of the changing seasons.

Hardrick often allowed the paint to flow down the canvas and concentrated on its expressive qualities rather than its descriptive function. He also preferred blending his own colors and rarely used premixed formulas, as he liked the spontaneity of creating hues while he painted. Combining imagination with observation, Hardrick created canvases vibrating with color and light. His magnificent scenes, with their vigorous application of paint and thick impasto, are
spectacular visions of the Indiana landscape.

Typical of Hardrick's autumn views is *Untitled Landscape* (fig. 24). Here densely foliated trees are enveloped in a delicate blue atmospheric haze. The reflection of the landscape in the water produces a mirrorlike impression that enhances the illusion of a wet surface. Well aware of the need for a sharp contrast along the water's edge to heighten this illusion, Hardrick used the rock formation bordering the creek to create the required opposing element and complete the compositional effect.

*Winter Landscape*, 1945 (fig. 25), exemplifies Hardrick's treatment of snow scenes. A frozen creek winds through the landscape, its icy surface broken by the trees' shimmering reflections. Hardrick captures the effect of light glistening off wide expanses of snow. The trees are cut off below the top of the composition, eliminating the horizon line and imparting an abstract quality reminiscent of the work of the American impressionist John H. Twachtman. In typical impressionist style the frigid stream is cropped on the left, implying the wintry scene continues into the viewer's space.

His landscapes are filled with lush foliage glistening in the warm sunlight and vividly expressive of the artist's love of nature (fig. 26). Occasionally Hardrick hints at the presence of humanity in his landscapes by including a farmhouse nestled among the trees. A clear, blue sky with its soft, white clouds hovers over these tranquil scenes. Sometimes a figure appears in the distance or a horse-drawn carriage works its way up a meandering road in an imaginary countryside far removed from city life.

Hardrick follows in the tradition of two important African-American artists, Robert S. Duncanson (1821 - 1872) and Edward M. Bannister (1828 - 1901). Duncanson, a Cincinnati artist, was the first major African-American landscape painter. He painted romantic landscapes in the Hudson River School style. Bannister, who settled in Rhode Island, was influenced by the Hudson River artists but eventually preferred the more lyrical mode of the Barbizon School.

Despite his prolific production of landscapes, Hardrick always considered himself first and foremost a portrait painter. In comparing Hardrick's landscapes with his portraits, Lucille Morehouse noted, "The colored friends who posed were real personalities, and they are alive on the canvas, but the landscape and woodland settings are formed altogether from the artist's imagination." His skill in the field of portraiture can be attributed to Otto Stark, his teacher at both Emmerich Manual Training High School and Herron. Stark had a strong interest in figure painting, which he passed on to his students. He replaced the traditional boring method of copying lithographs with drawing exercises designed to encourage students to express themselves in an inventive way using various media. Hardrick was the beneficiary of Stark's innovative teaching methods as well as his expertise as a figure painter.

Although Hardrick painted a diverse group of Indianapolis residents, his most sensitive portraits are of the city's African-American community. In his numerous portraits of the black citizens of Indianapolis, Hardrick captured on canvas a record of an elite group of African Americans to whom he looked for "co-operation and encouragement." Hardrick won many awards for his portraits and did, indeed, receive the support he desired.

*Portrait of a Woman*, 1932 (fig. 27), painted in one sitting, is a strong characterization of a ninety-year-old woman. It won first prize for an oil portrait and the outstanding painting prize at the 1933 Indiana State Fair. The likeness is a convincing expression of individuality, set in an unadorned gold background that accents the sitter's facial features. An otherwise straightforward portrait is given a dramatic twist by the figure's sideward glance. Through this simple gesture, Hardrick extends the subject beyond the confines of the canvas, suggesting that an unseen figure has captured the sitter's attention.

*Thou Good and Faithful Servant*, 1930 (fig. 28), an engaging image of an old woman based on a scriptural quotation, was the subject of an extensive review when it was exhibited at a local YMCA the year it was painted. The writer praised the work and commented on its spiritual content:

> The picture portrays an elderly Negro woman sitting in a shadowy room sewing on some bright-colored fabric that trails from her lap to the floor and plays an important part in both the color composition and the arrangement of line.

> The painting of still life afforded by a yellow work basket and the red-dotted textile which it holds is little short of perfect. But the evidence of greatest artistic skill comes through the way the artist leads the eye of the viewer from his exquisite bit of work with the basket to the center of interest and then on to other objects that play their part in the composition.

> A threadlike red ribbon draws one's eyes from the basket to the crimson fabric on which toil-worn hands are sewing. Following this, there is picked out in the shadows a little bouquet of red blossoms on the dimly outlined table, and from the flowers the eye goes naturally to a picture of Christ which hangs on the wall at the right. The figure in this
bit of wall decoration is dimly suggested rather than clearly outlined, so that it takes its place as one of the objects in the interior design, its frame affording the rectangular lines that are needed in the composition to break up the large wall mass, while the spiritual significance of the suggested divine personality is an important touch that adds immeasurably to the religious sentiment of the painting.[42]

Through the manipulation of compositional elements in this dark interior, Hardrick sympathetically renders the image of old age and implies the importance of religion in the daily life of his people.

**Woman in a Fur Coat** (fig. 29) shows a young woman wrapped in a warm, silky black fur whose high collar frames her features. This elegant woman is set against a warm yellow background, which envelops her in its rich glow. The flesh tones contrast with the figure’s black hair and deep brown, hypnotic eyes. In this work the fur coat suggests the woman’s wealth and is as important to the painting as the sitter’s features.

**Springtime (Portrait of Ella Mae Moore),** about 1933 (fig. 30), is a representation of the innocence of youth. Hardrick focuses on the young girl's quiet charm and refined beauty. He uses a delicate touch to bring out the soft texture of the sitter's chiffon dress. Conveying the quality of fabric was of particular interest to the artist, who enjoyed the challenge of painting fur, silk, and chiffon.

Hardrick often incorporated flowers and foliage in his portrait studies, creating compositions of charm and beauty. In **Little Brown Girl, 1927** (fig. 31), and **Lady in Red,** also known as **Before the Party,** about 1931 (fig. 32), he uses floral backgrounds to enhance his figures. In both works red, a symbol of joy and energy, is the dominant color of the clothing and foliage. [43] Hardrick leads the viewer's eye around **Lady in Red** using the curves of the figure's back and arm, which culminate in her hands resting on her knee. Swirls of blue in the background echo the contours of the figure. Her direct gaze implies she is a woman of determination and spirit. Unlike the lady in red, the little brown girl casts her eyes away from the viewer. With vinelike flowers encircling her youthful features, the young girl is a demure contrast to the debonair woman. **Little Brown Girl** was one of five paintings by Hardrick to receive the bronze second-place medal in the 1927 Harmon Awards competition.

Many of Hardrick's portraits were of well-to-do black women, who were not only married to successful men, but who were, themselves, entrepreneurs. Xenia Goodloe (fig. 33) was a notable dress designer and the wife of the head baker at the L. S. Ayres department store in downtown Indianapolis. Her husband's Lady Baltimore cakes were considered prized culinary treasures. It is not surprising that Hardrick, the most prominent black portrait painter in Indianapolis, was the artist chosen in 1930 to capture Mrs. Goodloe's likeness on canvas. Hardrick selected a seated, full-length pose to present a woman wearing a sophisticated gown that is probably one of her own designs. The sitter's supple, elegantly provocative body contrasts with the rigidity of the large chair encircling her. A white handkerchief trails gracefully from her hand, accenting her features and the warm, brown tonality of her skin. By eliminating extraneous details, Hardrick focuses attention on the sitter, bringing her into prominence through the manipulation of the background color.

Hardrick chose the subjects of his noncommissioned portraits for their grace, poise, charm, and beauty. He concentrated on his models' facial features, paying special attention to the expressive quality of their eyes. The artist sometimes finished portraits in only a few sittings, but occasionally worked with sitters for several months of weekly sessions before completing his work. If his subject was a personal friend, Hardrick often focused on personality, bringing out in the final rendering a characteristic facet of his sitter's temperament.[44]

Hardrick was fond of painting portraits of his family. His subjects recall the work of Indiana-born artist William Merritt Chase, who liked capturing his children in the middle of a game or chore. **Dolly and Rach,** about 1930 (fig. 34), is a portrait of Hardrick's youngest daughters. Rachel, about age eleven, is seated on the sofa, while her younger sister, Georgia, about five years old, stands with her arm outstretched. On the large cushioned seat a crumpled pillow adds a brilliant crimson highlight, to which the viewer's eye is drawn.[45] At first glance it appears Rachel is holding her sister's hand, but she is actually putting on her watch. Hardrick caught his daughters in this delightful pose and asked them to stay still while he sketched them. In just a short time the artist sent the girls off to play and completed the painting from his quick drawing and his keen memory.[46]

Besides his portraits of Indianapolis's African-American community, Hardrick also painted many of the city's prominent white citizens. Dr. C. H. Winders, a white Indianapolis minister and executive secretary of the American Church Federation, posed for Hardrick during a painting demonstration. The artist was asked to give a demonstration of his rapid portrait painting technique at the opening of his one-man show in 1931 at the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA. It lasted an hour and a half and resulted in the completion of the sitter's head and a sketch of the figure. Dr. Winders was so pleased with the results that he agreed to subsequent sittings at the end of the week to complete the life-size, half-length portrait. A reporter noted, "The canvas will show Mr. Hardrick's skill in handling the flesh tones and textures in an example of
Occasionally, Hardrick took his easel to downtown Indianapolis and painted as people watched. He often sold the still wet, newly finished work and then immediately put up another blank board and started again. Street in Indianapolis (fig. 35) is an example of one of these quickly painted scenes. Here the artist captures the golden glow of an evening sunset and the flurry of people returning home after work or shopping. The images are loosely painted and exhibit a spontaneity exemplifying the impressionist idiom. Cars and buildings in the background are almost completely obscured by the misty atmosphere, but close scrutiny reveals the Hume-Mansur building, once a prominent office complex on Ohio Street.

Bus in a Snowstorm (fig. 36) depicts a group of people bracing themselves against the cold as they board a bus. Heavy snow obliterates the landscape, leaving no discernible landmarks. The artist renders figures using only a few strokes of his brush, and thus concentrates on gestures rather than features. Hardrick contrasts the blowing snow with the warm, yellow light emanating from the interior of the bus, a haven for the traveler on a cold, wintry day. The most prominent figure is a black man, separated from the rest of the crowd, battling the blowing snow. He may be the artist's symbol of the African-American's struggle against a hostile world. Hardrick rarely ventured into the realm of social realist art, but when he did paint in this genre, his statements were subtle, not overt.

During the Depression years and World War II, artists frequently focused on the theme of work. Manual laborers were glorified as the backbone of American society. Hardrick captures the essence of hard work in National Malleable Company, 1941 (fig. 37), a painting of men forging steel. The artist had firsthand knowledge of this subject through his experience working at the Indianapolis Stove Foundry while attending Herron. Here he focuses dramatically on the task of pouring hot molten steel into molds. The glow from the fire envelopes the scene, echoing the intensity of Hardrick's response to his subject. Tonalities are subdued, with emphasis on shades of white and brown. A sense of movement and strain in the three foreground figures is enhanced by their bent backs and wide outstretched arms leading to the long handle of the pouring pots that dispense the hot steel. Framed by the machinery and the cross beams of the building, the men stand out against the dark interior. To balance the composition, Hardrick places three smaller figures, turning to leave, in the background. This painting is similar to a WPA mural the artist painted for Crispus Attucks High School in Indianapolis. The mural was never installed, probably because of an objection to the subject matter. Men dripping with perspiration from the hot fire were not the type of images of the African-American male the school wanted to convey to its students. According to Hardrick's eldest daughter, Rowena Tucker, school officials missed the meaning her father intended to convey. She feels he was portraying life without education and, therefore, the importance of staying in school.

Hardrick explained his role as a black artist in a brochure accompanying his January 1914 exhibit at Allen Chapel in Indianapolis. He said:

On this occasion I feel the necessity to make a short explanation as to the object of the present exhibition. As a race, the negro has made wonderful progress in the last half century. It has produced great men as orators, statesmen, inventors, educators and musicians, and now the field of arts and crafts is open to the negro. Mr. H. O. Tanner has been about the first to successfully venture forth and at present he stands alone expecting for such promising men as W. Scott to take his place.

The object of the present exhibition is an attempt to stimulate an interest among the colored citizens of Indianapolis to encourage art; to inspire, if possible, some young talented boy or girl to realize that "Life without labor is crime, and labor without art is brutality."

For those of us who are now making a feeble attempt, we will fall without the support of our race. We need your cooperation, your encouragement in order to successfully explore the field of art. In conclusion, I will say in the name of John T. Moor:

"'Tis the coward who stops at misfortune,
'Tis the knave who changes each day;
'Tis a fool who wins half the battle,
And throws all his chances away.

There's little in life but labor,
And tomorrow may prove but a dream,
Success is the bride of Endeavor,
And luck but a meteor's gleam.
The time to succeed is when others
Discouraged, show traces of tire;
The battle is fought in the homestretch
And won -- "twixt the flag and the wire."[50]

Hardrick was obviously aware of the importance of his contribution to the African-American community and its potentially far-reaching effects. He hoped his success as a local artist would inspire other young black students to pursue a career beyond laboring in foundries or in the fields. He saw a bright future for his people in the arts if they could obtain the needed support and encouragement of the community.

After the 1940s Hardrick’s work consisted mainly of landscapes and a few portraits. He often painted by day and drove a cab at night. Although Hardrick was always compelled to labor at jobs unrelated to his art, his paintings typically suggest a restful environment distant from his workaday world. Hardrick was a model for the younger generation of aspiring African-American artists and endeavored to pave the way for their progress. His career spanned more than sixty years, during which time he not only exhibited in his hometown and around the Midwest, but also in San Diego, Atlanta, and New York. The scope of his reputation became apparent when he was asked to supply information for E. Bénézit’s *Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs*, an international dictionary of artists. Hardrick had proven it was possible to achieve recognition without leaving Indiana. His ability to succeed as an artist, sometimes in the face of daunting odds, is vividly apparent in the abundant landscapes and portraits he produced, expressing his passion for nature and love for his people.

**Hale Aspacio Woodruff**

If Hale Woodruff were known only for his establishment of the Atlanta University Annual Exhibitions of Negro Art, his place in the history of American art would still be assured. But Woodruff was much more than the founder of this program; he was an important social realist painter and one of the nation’s innovative abstract artists.

As a student at the John Herron School of Art, Woodruff painted numerous landscapes under the influence of his teacher, the Indiana impressionist William Forsyth. Many of these landscapes were imaginary views filled with explosions of vivid color that took the impressionist idiom to the brink of abstraction and that recall the expressive compositions of the Dutch post-impressionist Vincent van Gogh. The artist referred to his imaginary landscapes as "ultra-impressionist," far removed from realism but still recognizable scenes.[51] Throughout his career, Woodruff continued to interpret rather than record his surroundings.

In conventional portraiture Woodruff admired the work of his close friend and colleague John Wesley Hardrick, even though the older artist's approach was different from his own. Hardrick was concerned with the sitter’s qualities, while Woodruff expressed his own thoughts about his subjects.[52] The two were most alike when Woodruff painted such portraits as *Countee Cullen*, 1928 (fig. 38). Cullen wrote poetry based on the African-American experience and was the recipient of the Harmon Foundation’s first gold medal for literature in 1927. Woodruff shows the poet casually seated in a chair surrounded by the attributes of his profession. A statue of the Nike of Samothrace -- the goddess of victory who descended to earth to crown the victor in a contest of arms, athletics, or poetry -- rests on a table. Behind the statue a bookcase alludes to Cullen’s literary skills.

Woodruff painted numerous conventional portraits, but he was primarily interested in figure studies. *Cigarette Smoker* (fig. 39) exemplifies his manner of portraying types rather than depicting specific individuals. Here Woodruff shows a forceful figure of an African-American male with strong facial features, hat tilted to one side, and a cigarette dangling from his mouth. He endows *Cigarette Smoker* with a monumental quality and sculptural form, enlivening the figure through a skillful use of line. Pride in his race and sensitivity to his subject are characteristic of Woodruff’s approach to portraiture and figural work.

When Woodruff sailed for France in 1927, Paris was the center of the international art scene. The city attracted writers, artists, and musicians, many of whom were Americans. During this period the Harlem Renaissance, in full swing in New York, inspired a French version known as *La Tumulte noire*. Parisians, fascinated with black culture, created a racially tolerant atmosphere that attracted African-American artists like Woodruff.[53]

By 1927 Woodruff was already a recognized artist. He had exhibited extensively in Indianapolis and at the Art Institute of Chicago. In 1926 he was the recipient of the first bronze medal in fine arts awarded by the Harmon Foundation. During his stay in Paris he visited the distinguished painter Henry Ossawa Tanner. It was not the master’s work, but "the image
Woodruff did not look to Tanner's academic style for inspiration: he focused instead on the innovative technique of Paul Cézanne. Woodruff admired the French artist's sense of structure, use of distortion, elimination of conventional perspective, and the expressive quality of his color. Cézanne's influence is readily discernible in Woodruff's Parisian landscapes, with their simplified forms and interlocking shapes (fig. 40). Woodruff commented on the importance of Cézanne:

[He] opened up new doors for me.... I set about trying to find a means by which I could learn from these examples, not to simply paraphrase them and copy them, but to learn their basic ideas beneath them.... I understood why Cézanne tilted the tops of his table, how he brought things forward, how he eliminated so-called optical perspective and used space as surface construction?.

The work of Chaim Soutine, an early exponent of modernism known for his free, expressionist brushwork, may have also inspired Woodruff. While in Cagnes-sur-Mer he lived in Soutine's old studio, and though he "felt the impact of Soutine's great work," Woodruff claimed, "I never succumbed to it." Instead, exposure to European art encouraged Woodruff to experiment with a wide variety of motifs and styles and eventually motivated him to pursue abstract modes of expression.

Woodruff's The Card Players, about 1978 (fig. 41), is an example of a painting inspired not only by Cézanne, but also by the cubism of Pablo Picasso. Although the impetus for Woodruff's subject was probably Cézanne's Two Card Players, 1890 - 1892 (Musée D'Orsay, Paris), its execution owes a considerable debt to Picasso's cubist interpretation of form. Woodruff spent many evenings playing cards with his friends the artist Palmer Hayden and the poet Countee Cullen. Cullen was in Europe for a two-year sojourn on a Guggenheim Fellowship. Hayden had won the Harmon Foundation gold medal in 1926, the same year Woodruff won the bronze. Both artists used their prize money to finance their European stays. The Card Players is an interpretation of these late-night games, incorporating the tilted table and blocklike forms associated with Cézanne. The unusual placement of the checkerboard behind the head of the left figure and the facial features derived from African masks relate to Picasso's Les Demoiselles d'Avignon, 1907 (Museum of Modern Art, New York). As Woodruff later recalled: "The master I chiefly admired at that time was Paul Cézanne; then Picasso, who was certainly bolder and more courageous in his cubist work. When I saw his painting called 'Les Demoiselles d' Avignon' -- cubist-like girls with black masks on -- the whole thing was clarified for me." The African influence in both Woodruff's and Picasso's masklike faces is derived from Fang sculpture. The Fang people are from Gabon in Central Africa, and their masks exhibit wide, convex foreheads and long, tapering, concave lower faces. With the assistance of Alain Locke, Woodruff had begun to collect African art at the Paris flea markets, and he eventually amassed a substantial collection. "I went back again and again and, between Cézanne's and the African work I was off and winging."

In 1931 Dr. John Hope, president of the newly established Atlanta University, recruited Woodruff to teach fine arts to undergraduate students from Spelman College and Morehouse College. For almost fifteen years Woodruff was the primary teacher in the art department at the Atlanta University Center and, toward the end of his tenure, the originator of the Atlanta University Annual Exhibitions.

Woodruff's art during this period was influenced by American scene painting and social realism, the dominant forces in American art from the 1920s to the 1940s. The social realists looked closely and critically at the world around them and depicted the poverty and disillusionment brought about by the Depression. Some of Woodruff's Atlanta landscapes are indebted to the work of the midwestern regionalist Thomas Hart Benton, who frequently looked to the American South for his subject matter. Woodruff's Georgia Landscape, 1934 - 35 (fig. 42) with its twisted trees and curvilinear design, exhibits the influence of Benton's rhythmically expressionist style.

Although Georgia Landscape is a powerful work, it is not the type of composition for which Woodruff's Atlanta period is known. Southland, about 1936 (fig. 43), is more in keeping with the style and subject matter that made his Atlanta landscapes so forceful. Ravaged by erosion, this grim wasteland with its discordant colors reveals the drama of the South. The hostile landscape is filled with broken, decaying trees, the skeletal remains of an abandoned church, crosses buried in the clay, and bleached mule bones. The earth itself is barren, and no sign of life is visible. Woodruff's bleak view of the southern landscape has a surrealist quality, making this isolated piece of land appear more ominous and threatening. The canvas successfully fuses social comment with the artist's flowing rhythms of color and form. In Woodruff's words, "There is much rich material in Atlanta and the Georgia landscapes are as fine as could be desired by any painter seeking subjects for his work."

Woodruff's Atlanta paintings include several figure studies, such as Sharecropper Boy, 1938 (fig. 44), that exhibit his sensitivity to his subject. Sharecroppers rented land not with money but with a portion of their yearly crop: it was a
Woodruff's compassionate portrayal of a young southern farmer shows a stoic but proud boy holding a farm implement. He appears resigned to his fate despite the lack of reward for his labor. Behind the figure looms an almost barren, blood-red landscape and a gloomy sky. A partially visible shack in the distance alludes to the sharecropper's meager living conditions.

Woodruff's images of the South were not confined to landscapes and figure studies. In his series of woodcuts and linoleum prints of 1933 to 1939, the artist protests not only the severe poverty facing blacks, but also the constant threat of hanging. In \textit{Giddap}, 1933 - 35 (fig. 45), a black man with a noose around his neck stands in a wagon. The driver, prodded by rowdy spectators shaking their fists and yelling, prepares to whip his horse and pull the wagon out from under his victim. Woodruff's sense of pattern and design keeps the image from becoming a devastating scene of horror, but this stark portrayal is vivid and compelling.

\textit{By Parties Unknown}, 1933 - 35 (fig. 46), the companion piece to \textit{Giddap}, shows the slain victim's body deposited on the doorstep of a black church. His head is down, his hands are tied behind his back, and the rope still hangs from his neck. These prints are clear pictures of the plight of the black man in a segregated society. Woodruff's lynching scenes were part of a 1935 exhibition held at the Arthur U. Newton Galleries in New York. This exhibition also included works by the black illustrator E. Simms Campbell and by Wilmer Jennings, a promising student of Woodruff, as well as pieces by Thomas Hart Benton, Reginald Marsh, and Paul Cadmus.\footnote{62}

In summer 1936 Woodruff spent six weeks in Mexico on a grant from the General Education Board.\footnote{63} There the artist joined a crew preparing the walls and mixing the paint for the famous Mexican muralist Diego Rivera. As Woodruff described it, he wanted to "get into the mural painting swing."\footnote{64} Woodruff's subsequent mural art was inspired by Rivera's glorification of the working class. Rivera's influence is evident in \textit{Poor Man's Cotton}, 1944 (fig. 47), particularly in the painting's shallow picture space, monumental but simplified forms, bold areas of color, and decorative patterning. Rivera's social realist style, however, is tempered by Woodruff's interest in abstraction. Although the men and women work in the cotton field, their bodies bent in labor, the design function of these figures is to form an abstract composition of twisting and turning shapes. Their rhythmic pattern is repeated in the hoes. The pulsating color and the swirling background landscape echo the composition's rhythms. Instead of lamenting the field workers' heavy toil, the artist creates a graceful and positive image of work. Woodruff stated, "Art can be local but it should transcend the scene. Reporting is not painting, and I try to present the local scene in unusual language."\footnote{65}

Woodruff felt strongly about the role of an artist in society: "I believe that every artist whatever his racial or national identity should interpret his life experience and beliefs in his own individual manner. Yet these experiences and beliefs may very well spring from the artist's genuine concern for the problems of man. For it is man, above all, whose purposes should be served by the talents and productions of his fellow man."\footnote{66}

In 1941 Woodruff was among the many artists commissioned by the Works Progress Administration to provide art for use in public buildings. Two companion paintings executed between 1941 and 1943 for placement in the Herndon Homes public housing units in Atlanta are social commentaries illustrating the importance environment plays in people's lives.\footnote{67} \textit{Results of Poor Housing} (fig. 48) depicts the dilapidated living conditions of many African Americans before public housing, while \textit{Results of Good Housing} (fig. 49) shows families in a modern public housing unit.

Incised on the back of \textit{Results of Poor Housing} is a list including disease, crime, vagrancy, lack of pride, poor citizenship, ignorance, and low morals. It is not certain whether Woodruff wrote this inscription, but it is clear from this image of rundown shacks and listless people that these were the conditions the artist was representing.

On the reverse of \textit{Results of Good Housing} the inscription includes civic pride, good citizenship, education, health, and wise use of leisure. In this canvas the housing units are solid brick, newly constructed buildings in good condition. The family on the left is planting a garden, and the one on the right prepares the children for school. The paintings were designed to emphasize the anticipated positive effects of living in the new housing developments.

Woodruff regularly took his students on sketching trips around the Atlanta area, training them to look at their own environment for subject matter and to record its salient features and social conditions. Woodruff told \textit{Time} magazine, "We are interested in expressing the South as a field, as a territory; its peculiar rundown landscapes, its social and economic problems, and Negro people."\footnote{68} Woodruff's Atlanta canvases reflect the artist's intense feelings about the impoverished living conditions he and his students observed on their expeditions outside the studio. He hoped these excursions, and the paintings they inspired, would serve as a catalyst for change.

During the last of Woodruff's Atlanta years, he turned away from realistic modes of expression to pursue more abstract concepts in his art. From his early years as an artist, Woodruff was drawn to the modern movements. When he arrived in
Atlanta in 1931, he painted *Abstract Composition*, a nonrepresentational work in the cubist mode of Picasso and Braque. Woodruff stifled his tendency toward abstraction, not only because regionalism was the dominant style in America, but also to encourage his students to paint their people and the world around them.

In 1943 Woodruff received a Julius Rosenwald Fellowship to work in New York for two years. The New York art world was in turmoil when Woodruff arrived in the city, as regionalism and social realism were being challenged by the new movement, abstract expressionism. Woodruff returned to Atlanta to teach in 1945, but the excitement of New York and the developing nonrepresentational modes were hard to resist. He accepted a teaching position at New York University in 1946 and upon his arrival began to develop an abstract style of his own.

One of Woodruff’s early New York paintings, *Central Park Rocks*, also known as *Rocks in Central Park*, 1947 (fig. 50), is a work in which natural forms give way to abstract shapes and rhythms. The geometry of the composition is broken only by trees, which become less discernible in the distance. Foreground rocks sway left and right, creating a tension repeated throughout the landscape. This rhythmic movement of opposing elements connotes musical counterpoint. *Central Park Rocks* is an optimistic composition expressing the artist’s enthusiasm for his new surroundings. It is a harbinger of Woodruff’s movement toward abstraction and his entry into the New York art world.

Almost half of Woodruff’s career was spent in Atlanta, where he made his mark as a teacher and an artist. He lectured extensively and left copious notes for future generations to study and ponder. An outspoken advocate of art for the betterment of man, Woodruff used his talents to bring about favorable changes in the lives of African Americans.

Notes
4 "Colored Artist to Study Negro," 2.
6 Unfortunately, this 1916 portrait of Booker T. Washington could not be located. It is in the collection of the George Washington Carver Museum, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, but repeated searches by the institution failed to uncover the painting.
12 Estell, 26.
14 Roberts, 37.
16 Huldah Skinner, "William Edouard Scott and the Billingsley Model." Interview with Mr. Pierre-Noel. Master’s Thesis,
17 Quote appeared in *Le Matin*, a Port-au-Prince newspaper, in 1932. The exact title and date of the article are unknown. From the archives of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library.


21 Ibid., 296.

22 Stebech, 28.

23 Ibid., 50.

24 Ibid., 40.

25 Roberts, 53, 56, 58.


27 Roberts, 60.

28 Letter from William Edouard Scott to Edward B. Rowan, 26 June 1943.

29 Roberts, 65.


33 The Hoosier Group included Theodore Clement Steele, William Forsyth, John Ottis Adams, Otto Stark, and Richard B. Gruelle. They are often considered the first regional group of American impressionist painters.

34 Interview with Charles Wharton, 26 May 1994.

35 Ibid.

36 Lucille E. Morehouse, "In the World of Art: John Hardrick Has Art Exhibit of Merit in Richmond Church," *The Indianapolis Star*, 16 July 1933, 30.

37 Charles Wharton stayed with his parents in Indianapolis while attending John Herron School of Art from about 1954 to 1956. Hardrick lived with the Wharton family on and off from about 1947 and maintained a studio in their basement. Wharton would watch the artist paint and ask questions, which Hardrick was happy to answer. He credits Hardrick with teaching him the technique of constructing a landscape and how to mix primary colors to obtain a desired hue.

38 Interview with Charles Wharton.


43 For a contemporary review of Lady in Red, see "In the World of Art: Oil paintings of John Wesley Hardrick Shown at Wheatly Y.W.C.A.," *The Indianapolis Star*, 14 June 1931, 12.

44 Conversation with Rachel Buckner, 8 September 1994.
46 Conversation with Rachel Buckner, 8 September 1994.
48 Interview with Mary Kathalyn Stuart Mance by William Taylor, 24 February 1994.
49 Conversation with Rowena Tucker, 8 September 1994.
50 "John Hardrick's Art Exhibit catalogue" (Indianapolis: Allen Chapel, 1019 Broadway, January 1914), n.p.
51 "Woodruff the Negro Artist Off for 2 years to Paint and Study Masters," *The New York Sun*, 1927, n.p.
56 Stoelting, 181.
58 Card Players was originally painted in 1928-29 and is now badly deteriorated. In summer 1978 Woodruff repainted *The Card Players*, which appeared in his retrospective exhibition at The Studio Museum in Harlem in 1979.
59 Interview with Hale Woodruff by Albert Murray, 18 November 1968, from the Hale Woodruff papers, Amistad Research Center, New Orleans.
63 A discussion of this award can be found in Stoelting, 213.
64 Winifred Stoelting, Mary Schmidt Campbell, and Gylbert Coker, *Hale Woodruff: 50 Years of His Art* (New York: The Studio Museum in Harlem, 1979), 81.
69 For a discussion of Woodruff's New York period, see Chapter 2 in this book.

**About the Author**

Harriet G. Warkel, curator of American art at the Indianapolis Museum of Art, earned her master's degree in art history from Indiana University. She has curated numerous exhibitions for the Indianapolis Museum of Art, including *Edward Hopper: Paper to Paint* and *A Shared Heritage: Art by Four African Americans* for which she wrote the accompany catalogues. She has also written numerous articles for *American Art Review.*
Resource Library editor's note

The above text was reprinted in Resource Library on July 27, 2009, with permission of the author and the Indianapolis Museum of Art, which was granted to TFAO on June 10, 2009.

This essay appeared in the exhibition catalogue A Shared Heritage: Art by Four African Americans, and was adapted, along with additional material, into an article that appeared in the February - March 1996 issue of American Art Review.

Resource Library wishes to extend appreciation to the author and Shana Herb Johannessen for their help concerning permissions for reprinting the above text.

Readers may also enjoy:

- African American Art
- The Paintings of William Edouard Scott; text by Rachel Berenson Perry (5/16/08)
- Hale Woodruff oral history interview Nov. 18, 1968, from Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

For biographical information on artists referenced in this essay please see America's Distinguished Artists, a national registry of historic artists

Read more articles and essays concerning this institutional source by visiting the sub-index page for the Indianapolis Museum of Art in Resource Library.

Links to sources of information outside of our web site are provided only as referrals for your further consideration. Please use due diligence in judging the quality of information contained in these and all other web sites. Information from linked sources may be inaccurate or out of date. TFAO neither recommends or endorses these referenced organizations. Although TFAO includes links to other web sites, it takes no responsibility for the content or information contained on those other sites, nor exerts any editorial or other control over them. For more information on evaluating web pages see TFAO's General Resources section in Online Resources for Collectors and Students of Art History.

Search Resource Library for thousands of articles and essays on American art.

Copyright 2009 Traditional Fine Arts Organization, Inc., an Arizona nonprofit corporation. All rights reserved.
He studied at the John Herron Art Institute in Indianapolis, Indiana and went on to Harvard University. He was the recipient of a Harmon Foundation Award that permitted him to study in Paris from 1927-1931 at the Academie de la Grande Chaumiere. The economic depression forced Woodruff to return to the United States and he accepted a teaching position at Atlanta University. Artists who felt uneasy expressing themselves with conventional styles of art that could not correctly convey their visions created it. In conclusion Hale A. Woodruff was one of the best African American painters of his time. He was fortunate to be a well-educated and respected painter. His accomplishments are of great merit due to his integrity and faithfulness to the African-American culture. By 1917, Hardrick's local reputation was such that he and William Edouard Scott were featured in the Tenth Annual Exhibition of Works by Indiana Artists at the Herron School of Art, both men receiving critical praise. By 1924, he and Hale Woodruff shared a studio at 542½ Indiana Avenue. Unfortunately, his financial situation was such that by 1925 he was working in the family trucking business and had started a carpet cleaning business to help support his family, but still found time to paint. Commenting on a 1927 exhibition at the Pettis Gallery in Indianapolis, one review commented that Hale A. Woodruff. Born. Cairo, Illinois. In 1946 Woodruff moved to New York where he taught in the art department at New York University from 1947 until his retirement in 1968. During the mid-1960s Woodruff and fellow artist Romare Bearden were instrumental in starting the Spiral organization, a collaboration of African-American artists working in New York. Woodruff's New York works were greatly influenced by abstract expressionism and the painters of the New York School who were active during the late 1940s and 1950s. Among his associates were Adolf Gottlieb, Mark Rothko, Franz Kline, and Jackson Pollock. Following a long and dis