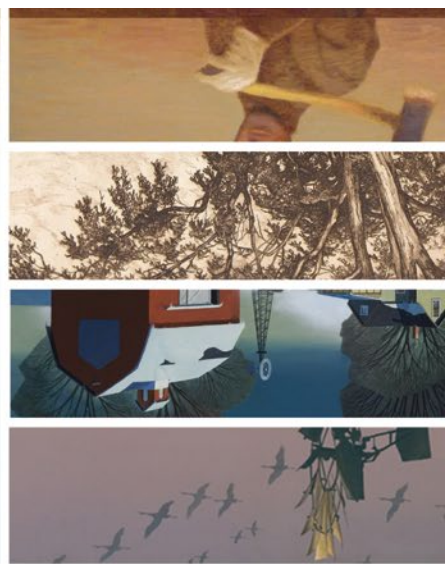


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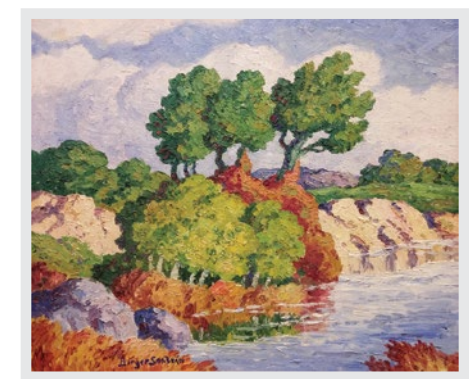


Agriarian Art
 NEWSLETTER

XIII
 VOLUME, ISSUE II
 2019
 MAY

BONE CREEK
 MUSEUM OF AGRARIAN ART

Swedish impressionist painter Birger Sandzén (1871-1954) gained a prosperous international reputation in his lifetime. His works have appeared in more than 600 exhibitions in the United States and Europe. Remarkably, the European-trained artist chose to live in Lindsborg, Kansas, rather than New York, the heart of the American art world. He was the chair of the art department at Bethany College in Lindsborg for nearly 50 years, from 1899 to 1946, having turned down numerous offers to be on faculty at larger universities across the country.



Birger Sandzén, *Untitled (Smoky Hill River)*, circa 1953, oil on board, 20x24".

Sandzén was born in Blidsberg, Sweden in 1871. His parents afforded him a classical education. However, he did not follow in the traditional style of the Royal Academy of Art but found himself under the tutelage of one of the more modern painters in Stockholm, Anders Zorn (1862-1920). Zorn and Richard Berg (1958-1919) initially taught Sandzén to limit his color palette to five colors. A brief study in Paris with Edmond François Aman-Jean also refined his vision for color and light. Sandzén came away with a style using more pigment and bright colors and more direct brushwork in his landscapes than his contemporaries.

When Sandzén emigrated in 1894, he moved 4,000 miles from Sweden to the 25-year-old Swedish American community of Lindsborg, Kansas. This was an entirely new world for him. The Smoky Hill River Valley was his first introduction to the American landscape and just the beginning of his explorations into Colorado and Utah and farther West. The daily changing colors of earth and sky that he witnessed in the West further pushed

“Birger Sandzén is an amazing phenomenon in American art: a Swedish-born, Paris-trained modernist who settled in the center of the American prairie.”



Henry Adams, professor, Case Western Reserve University

Sandzén’s color theory. He said in 1931 in an interview with the *Detroit News*, “Color is to a painting what the voice is in singing.” Earlier Swedish landscapes of the north and even the first paintings in Kansas now seem somber in comparison to the intensely vivid color of his American scenes. The high point in his use of color pigment was in the 1920s and 30s. A review in the *New York Herald* from 1922 stated, “[He] paints with fiery,

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IMAGES

(Cover) Birger Sandzén, *Kansas Farm*, c. 1943, oil on board, 30x44".
 (Block) Birger Sandzén in his studio, 1917.
 (Headshot) Birger Sandzén portrait, 1913.

Images Courtesy of the Sandzén Memorial Gallery, Lindsborg, Kansas.



CALENDAR -of- EVENTS

03 **Birger Sandzén: Land of Color**
MAY May 3, 2019- July 28, 2019

08 **A Collector's Eye: Wempner Collection**
MAY Opens May 8, 2019

28 **Birger Sandzén Reception with Ron Michael**
JUL July 28, 2019, 2-4pm

29 **Summer Art Day Camps**
JUL July 29-31, 2019

01 **Butler County Chamber After Hours**
AUG August 1, 2019, 5-8pm

01 **Braceros: Melding History and Art**
AUG August 1 - Nov. 17, 2019

Museum Hours

Wed, Fri, Sat 10am-4pm
Thursday 10am-8pm
Sunday 1pm-4pm

Appointments and tours available

FREE admission

402.367.4488
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BONE CREEK
MUSEUM OF AGRARIAN ART

575 E St., David City, NE 68632

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tempestuous colors quite unlike any native who has gone west to paint."

Sandzén often felt isolated geographically and stylistically despite a feverish schedule of exhibitions and art clubs. He was an individualist, breaking all artistic convention. He was an anomaly on the prairie, yet by all accounts did not regret living in the Midwest. The artistic isolation felt daunting at times as he wrote to a friend that he felt "too radical or too conservative or his colors too strange" to find many kindred spirits among his contemporaries. According to the Sandzén Gallery, a more personal study of Sandzén reveals his personal qualities of strong character, optimism, and congenial spirit.

We are grateful to feature a selection of original paintings on loan from the Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery in Lindsborg, Kansas, with the support of the Nebraska Arts Council and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment.

-Amanda Mobley Guenther, curator

Reference: Emory Lindquist, "Birger Sandzén: A Painter and His Two Worlds," published in the *Great Plains Quarterly*, Winter 1985.



Birger Sandzén, *Sunset in the Mountains*, circa 1932, oil on canvas, 18x24".

NEWS & EVENTS

SUMMER ART DAY CAMP JUNE 29-31

The partnership with Butler County Arts Council continues to bring quality art education to David City. Two sessions each day, June 29-31, will be hosted at the Aquinas Catholic Schools art classroom. Each 3-hour session costs \$10 per individual open to all ages 8 and above. Sessions are from 9am to noon and 1pm to 4pm each day.



Sarah Juranek returns to head up the sessions. Gabrielle Comte, Collections Manager of Bone Creek Museum, will lead a session that connects to the summer exhibitions. Sculpture clay teacher Angie Frier is also returning for a class. Some of the artwork will be on display at the David City Hruska Memorial Library in August.

Volunteer arts council administrator Anna Nolan is taking registrations and can be reached at anolan@bonecreek.org or 402-641-6458.



**SAVE
THE DATE**

We continue our annual Corn Fest with a Mexican themed event in honor of the Braceros exhibition held at the Butler County Events Center. Look for an invitation in the mail coming in July.

SEPT
08
2019

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

A COLLECTOR'S EYE:

SELECTIONS FROM THE GERALD WEMPNER COLLECTION

Bone Creek has been pleased to be receiving art for the past several years from collector Gerald Wempner who has an affinity for horses. Wempner first approached the museum to share his personal collection which he entitled *Horsepower*. Speaking of the 10 paintings and seven sculptures, he wrote, "each was a personal choice because they projected certain artistic merit and/or evoked memories of an earlier era when the horse was the predominant source of power and transportation." Numerous pieces from his original *Horsepower* collection have been gifted to the museum and are now on view in the South gallery. As his relationship with the museum has grown, we have learned that he, like many collectors, has an interest in a great variety of things, but takes seriously his search for worthy objects. Also, on view will be gifts from Wempner that include works by the group of 19th century French bronze sculptors called the Animaliers and pastoral scenes of European farmers and shepherds.



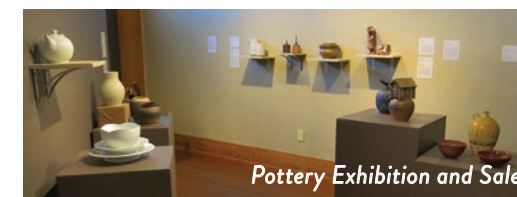
Herb Sellin, *Belgians Plowing*, acrylic painting, 24x36", Bone Creek Collection

In 2015, the museum hosted an exhibition of 74 small works loaned from New York collector Ken Ratner. Some of the other artist collections under the care of the museum include prints by Luigi Lucioni, Beth Van Hoesen and Edward Glannon. We look forward to offering more exhibitions from collections within the permanent holdings.

Both Wempner and Ratner collect objects that are personally meaningful. What people collect speaks to what they value. Ratner expressed that he looks for paintings that are vital, real, and truthful. Wempner is not concerned with "big name" artists but that the work is authentic. Consider this exercise. Think about what the art items that you own say about you. Or if you were to start a collection what kinds of things would you buy?

HITTING ON A THEME

As it happens, four of the five exhibitions this year focus heavily on three-dimensional works. The year began with the delicate glasswork of Kearney artist Steven Ramsey. The spring hosted our first pottery exhibition and sale. And now we are looking to sculpture focused on Mexican American heritage and numerous bronze and porcelain figurines from the Gerald Wempner collection. Though each of these exhibitions are thematically very different, all of them are heavily composed of three-dimensional artwork. What coincidence!



Pottery Exhibition and Sale



DALE NICHOLS CORNER

The American art market has seen a recent resurgence of interest in Regionalist artists. Typically, these trends start on the coasts and work their way inward to the plains. Nichols is Nebraska's top Regionalist artist and his works are currently alive and well in Lincoln, Nebr. Original paintings by Nichols are currently on display at the Sheldon Museum of Art, Kiechel Art Gallery and the newly opened Lincoln Art Company gallery. Some of our Nichols paintings are also on display including the one pictured below.



Dale Nichols, *Chicken of Dinner*, 1935, oil on canvas, 30x40", David City Public Schools, on long term loan to Bone Creek Museum.

WORTHY RIVALS \$49.99



Order online or contact the museum to purchase

bonecreek.org