

# *Accidental Genius: Art from the Anthony Petullo Collection*

## Biographies of the Artists

### **Consuelo Amézcuca** **American, b. Mexico, 1903–1975**

Born in Piedras Negras, Mexico, Consuelo “Chelo” González Amézcuca moved to Del Rio, Texas, with her parents and five siblings in 1913. Her parents were storytellers, musicians, and teachers. Amézcuca intended to study art at the Academy of San Carlos in Mexico City, but she forfeited her scholarship due to the death of her father.

Amézcuca started drawing in 1964 and first exhibited in 1968. Her intricate early drawings are in black ballpoint pen on card. She subsequently incorporated colored inks, crayon, and felt-tip pen. Many of her drawings feature her poems, for which she received several awards in Mexico. She also took up carving into stone shells in 1956.

Amézcuca mapped out her drawings in her head, then filled the surrounding page with lines reminiscent of the filigree jewelry that she often wore. These lines recall the decorative arts of pre-Columbian cultures and Mexican textiles. Her subjects include colonial architecture, exotic locales, biblical iconography, Mexican folklore, Native American heroes, and decorative elements such as flowers, fans, and peacocks. Amézcuca continued to live in Del Rio with her sister until her death.

### **Eddie Arning** **American, 1898–1993**

Eddie Arning was born in Germania, Texas. His parents, both German immigrants of Lutheran faith, had five children. In 1905 the couple purchased a farm. Arning lived and worked on the farm until 1928, when the Austin County Court sent him to the state hospital because of violent behavior. In 1934 he was committed to the Texas Confederate Home for Men, where staff member Helen Mayfield provided art materials to the patients.

Arning began drawing scenes of farm life and geometric shapes in 1964. He introduced flattened, angular human figures, laid out with pencil and a straightedge, to his work in 1966. Initially using crayon, he started working with oil pastels, blending to create an array of colors, in 1969. He rubbed his works to achieve a smoothly polished surface. Arning collected magazine advertisements and photos to use as source materials. He also collected objects such as clothing, wood, and metal. A small group of patrons purchased his work, which was cataloged first by Rob Cogswell in 1966, then by collector and friend Alexander Sackton starting in 1967. Arning signed his works “Artis Wrk by E.A.” Over a nine-year period, he created between two thousand and twenty-five hundred drawings.

Arning entered a nursing home in 1967. Asked to leave in 1973 because of uncooperative behavior, he moved in with his sister and stopped drawing within a year. After three years, he moved to Westview Manor Nursing home in MacGregor, Texas, where he died in 1993.

### **James Bloomfield** **American, b. 1945**

James Bloomfield was born in Cincinnati. His ancestors settled in the eastern Appalachian highlands in the late eighteenth century, and during the latter part of the Great Depression, his grandfather moved the family north to Ohio to find work. Bloomfield has said that he feels connected to the mountains. He painted in his late twenties but stopped working and destroyed his work in response to a friend’s discouraging comments. He started making art again following the death of his mother in the late 1980s, using both natural and man-made materials to form his elongated sculptures. In June 1992 he was featured in the Kentucky Educational Television program *On the Cutting Edge*. Bloomfield currently resides in Jackson County, Kentucky.

**Cleveland Brown**  
**British, b. Jamaica 1942**

Cleveland Brown was born in St. Catherine, Jamaica. He immigrated to Great Britain in 1961, where he plied his skills as a master carpenter. He began to paint in 1974, and his subjects range from socially conscious issues like labor strikes to depictions of the British royal family. Brown lives and works in London.

**Nek Chand**  
**Indian, b. 1924**

Nek Chand was born and grew up north of Lahore, India, in the Shakargarh region (now part of Pakistan) of Punjab. In 1947 he was displaced from his Punjab village as a result of the new border between India and Pakistan. He moved to Chandigarh in 1951. While working as a road inspector for the Punjab Transportation Corporation in the 1950s, he began to take home discarded materials—detritus from the villages that were demolished in the process of building the new capital—on his bicycle. He built armatures from metal bicycle frames, covered these in concrete, and created mosaic-like surfaces by embedding broken pieces of glass, pottery, bangles, porcelain bathroom fixtures, stones, and electrical plugs. In 1958 he started installing his sculptures in overgrown woods owned by the state.

Over an eighteen-year period, Chand built up large groups of lively figures: deities, courtiers, cowherds, beggars, ladies fetching water, dancers in a variety of stances, and animals. He said that stories of lost kingdoms, told by his mother, inspired what he calls “The Kingdom of the Gods and Goddesses.” The government discovered his installation in 1975. Chand was able to enlist public support, and the Rock Garden escaped demolition and officially opened to the public in 1976.

In addition to thousands of sculptures, Chand’s Rock Garden features stone pathways, miniature villages reflecting elements of rural northern India’s vernacular architecture, fifteen-foot walls, steel and cement tree roots, fountains, and cascading waterfalls engineered by the artist. His intimate, illegally installed concrete works contrast with the nearby capital complex, a series of monumental, largely concrete government buildings designed by French modernist architect Le Corbusier, which Chand observed the building of in the 1950s.

**Henry Darger**  
**American, 1892–1973**

With 15,145 pages of single-spaced typewritten text and several hundred drawings and watercolor paintings, Henry Darger’s epic, *The Story of the Vivian Girls, in What is known as the Realms of the Unreal, of the Glandeco-Angelinnian War Storm, Caused by the Child Slave Rebellion*, is the largest known work by a single author. Double-sided panoramas ranging from two to twelve feet in length feature the story’s protagonists, the Vivian girls, whom Darger created using composite tracings from the popular sources he collected: magazines, newspapers, catalogs, coloring books, comics, and religious iconography. His prolific body of work also includes a second work of fiction of more than 10,000 handwritten pages, a 5,084-page autobiography, several diaries, and a daily weather log that he kept for ten years.

Darger was born in Chicago. His mother died in childbirth when he was four years old. He never met his sister, who was given up for adoption. Darger’s father took care of him until 1900, when the elder Darger became infirm and was taken to St. Augustine’s Catholic Mission home, where he died in 1905. Henry was first placed in a Catholic boys’ home and then in an asylum in Lincoln, Illinois. After a series of failed attempts, he successfully escaped in 1908. According to his autobiography, he walked back to Chicago and witnessed a large tornado on the way, which is often related to the foreboding import of weather in his work. He was dismissed from the army in 1918, an experience that may have influenced his interest in the Civil War and the prominent role of soldiers and war in his stories.

Darger moved into a room in the Lincoln Park area of Chicago in 1930. He found a job as a janitor in a Catholic hospital with the help of his godmother and worked until his retirement in 1963. He attended mass daily, often multiple times. Darger became ill and was taken to St. Augustine’s, where he died in 1973. His landlord, Nathan Lerner, realized the power of his work while dismantling the stacks and piles that filled his room. Much of Darger’s writing and collection is now at Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art in Chicago. The Henry Darger Study Collection at the American Folk Art Museum in New York also holds many of his works.

**Sylvette David**  
**French, b. 1934**

Sylvette David was born into a bohemian family. Her father, Emmanuel David, was an art dealer in Paris, and her mother, Honor Gell, was an oil painter and the daughter of an English vicar. The couple divorced before Sylvette was born, and Gell moved her daughter and two sons to a nudist colony on an island off the French Riviera.<sup>1</sup> At the age of fifteen David was sent to a progressive boarding school in England called Summerhill, where she met Toby Jellenix, who would become her first husband.

When David was seventeen years old, she and Jellenix moved to southern France with her mother and brother. Jellenix made avant-garde metal chairs. Pablo Picasso noticed the chairs and asked Jellenix to bring some to his nearby studio. David accompanied him. Picasso subsequently presented a picture of her that he had drawn from memory and asked that she model for him. For three months in 1954, David worked as his model and started drawing while she posed. Her beauty and style inspired women, including Brigitte Bardot, who appropriated her look.

According to David, after Jellenix fell in love with her best friend, she had an intense spiritual experience. She remarried and moved to England. She began painting in her forties and signed her name Lydia Corbett to distinguish her identity as an artist from her role as a model; she later added a second signature to these early paintings, using her real name. Her oil-on-board and watercolor paintings often feature flowers, female figures, and mermaids.

Notes

1. See Anthony Harrison, "Pablo and the Ponytail," *Guardian*, December 10, 2004.

**James Dixon**  
**Irish, 1887–1970**

James Dixon's aerial views of ships amid speckled surf record the activities of a marine-based community and the topography of Tory Island, Ireland, where he was born in 1887 and spent his entire life. Dixon, a fisherman and farmer, often evoked the power of the sea to cause catastrophes. Contrasting his paintings of waves confronting sinuous shores are boxy houses (often depicted frontally yet from an aerial perspective) and rectangular fields scraped into parallel lines for planting, plowing, and harvesting. He also painted current and local events, still lifes, figure-ground portraits of residents, and images of religious figures, which lack a ground plane. His source materials included photographs from newspapers and magazine illustrations. Skilled at crafting objects such as model ships and decorative wooden boxes, Dixon made his own paintbrushes out of horse and donkey hair, which he preferred to conventional brushes.

Dixon began painting late in life but worked consistently from the early 1950s until his death. British artist Derek Hill came to Tory Island in the 1950s and met Dixon around 1958, when Dixon famously asserted his equal footing with the established London artist. Impressed with Dixon's work, Hill brought it to the attention of art professionals. Dixon inspired many local residents to take up painting.

Dixon's work was exhibited in Belfast, London, Dublin, and Vienna during the three last years of his life. A seminal exhibition in 1999–2000 at the Irish Museum of Modern Art and Tate Gallery St. Ives paired his work with that of Alfred Wallis, a self-taught artist who also portrayed seafaring life and the terrain of a coastal region of the British Isles.

**Louis Ernout**  
**French, 1892–1983**

Louis Ernout captured the streets and architecture of Paris in his paintings, including his own Galerie Chappe on rue Chappe, in the Montmartre district. His painting of his gallery depicts its location at base of the steps leading to the monumental Basilica of Sacré-Coeur. There he exhibited only the work of other artists. He resided in the unheated back rooms of the gallery.

Ernout was born in Lille, France. He painted as a child and took up his interest in earnest following the death of his wife and daughter in the early 1970s. He was also an accomplished musician who led an orchestra, composed music, and played the clarinet, dedicating forty-five years to his career in music. He died in Villeneuve-la-Garenne.

**Minnie Evans**  
**American, 1892–1987**

In her shapely, symmetrical works on paper, Minnie Evans often combined a central human face with parts of plants to create decorative biomorphic landscapes.

Minnie Eva Jones was born in Long Creek, North Carolina. Her family was of Trinidadian descent. Her parents were rural farmers. She grew up in Wilmington, North Carolina, and was raised by her grandmother in the Methodist Episcopal faith. Evans described having many vivid visions and dreams since childhood, which her grandmother told her were “signs and wonders” sent from God. She attended school until she was ten years old and then worked selling clams and oysters. When she was sixteen, she moved to Wrightville Beach and married Julius Evans. They had three sons. Beginning in 1918, Minnie Evans worked for the family of Sarah and Pembroke Jones, first as a domestic servant, then for twenty-seven years as a gatekeeper in the Airlie Gardens, which Sarah had started designing in the early 1900s. When Evans started drawing in 1935, her work featured brightly colored flowers and foliage like those in the garden. She later added winged, mythical, and biblical creatures to her works in ink, graphite, wax crayon, and oil paint. A trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1966, on the occasion of an exhibition of her work in New York, influenced her decision to make larger-scale works.

**Johann Fischer**  
**Austrian, 1919–2008**

Johann Fischer was born in Kirchberg am Wagram, Austria. He grew up on a small farm with six siblings and trained as a baker. In 1940, following the outbreak of World War II, he was drafted into the German army and was later captured by American forces. He returned home in 1946 and worked on his parents’ farm, taking it over when his father retired. In 1957 he received treatment for hallucinations. He was institutionalized in the hospital in Maria Gugging, an area within the town of Klosterneuburg, outside Vienna, in 1961.

Fischer began a routine drawing practice, with the encouragement of psychiatrist Leo Navratil, at the age of sixty-three. Recognizing the talent of his patients, Navratil founded a residential community of psychiatric patients with serious artistic practices called the House of Artists. It opened in 1981 on a hilltop in Maria Gugging. The small building accommodates about nine residents. Fischer moved into the House of Artists in 1982.

Working from his imagination, Fischer portrayed humans, animals, farm life, and political events in pen and crayon in his early drawings. His later works often incorporate neatly lettered satirical and humorous texts. His works have been included in many group exhibitions, such as ABCD: A Collection of Art Brut at the Museum of American Folk Art in New York in 2001.

**George Fredericks**  
**English, b. 1929**

George Fredericks first exhibited his paintings in 1957 and soon developed a following among artists in Britain and overseas, including Peter Blake and Larry Bell. His work has been shown in galleries in London, Hamburg, Zurich, and Amsterdam, as well as in several museums in France.

**Johann Garber**  
**Austrian, b. 1947**

Johann Garber was born in Wiener Neustadt, Austria. When he was nineteen years old, he started treatment at the psychiatric hospital in Maria Gugging, a community within the Austrian town of Klosterneuburg. He started making art in the late 1970s and moved into the House of Artists in Maria Gugging in 1981.

Garber’s first colored pencil works feature figures formed with blocks of color. In the early 1980s he worked with black ink applied with a fine pen. His source materials include old calendars and photos. His flat, colorful drawings bring together celestial bodies, plants, nude figures, animals, buildings, imagined places, various objects, symbols, text, and decorative motifs. He often spends months at a time on one piece, covering every inch to create complex, sweeping compositions. His brightly colored paintings, which he started making in 1983, are more loosely arranged. Garber also paints found objects, including nesting boxes, tree fungi, wood, and toy guns. His paintings can be found throughout the House of Artists: on doorframes and light switches and in the boiler room.

**Madge Gill**  
**English, 1882–1961**

Madge Gill, born Maude Ethel Eades, endured a displaced childhood in the East End of what is now Greater London. Embarrassed by her illegitimacy, her mother, aunt, and grandfather first hid her existence and then sent her to an orphanage at Barkingside at age nine. Five years later the orphanage sent her to work as a domestic servant on farms in Ontario, Canada.

In 1903 she returned to London and became a nurse at Whipps Cross Hospital in Leytonstone. She moved in with another aunt, who initiated her interest in spiritualism. Gill would later say that a spirit called Myrninerest, whom she first encountered in 1920, guided her drawings, which typically featured female figures in 1920s garb enmeshed in intricately patterned, spatially complex planes. At the age of twenty-five, she married her cousin, a stockbroker named Thomas Edwin Gill. The couple had three sons, one of whom died of influenza in 1918. When she bore a stillborn daughter in 1919, she became very ill and lost sight in her left eye. She started trying different art forms later that year: first knitting, then writing, and finally large drawings on cloth. Gill was also a painter, pianist, embroiderer, and craftsperson. Her ink drawings feature vigorous marks, often weaving together stairs and checkerboards. She worked in various scales, from small postcards to large rolls of calico, some more than thirty feet long. She died in London, leaving her work to her local borough.

**Jakob Greuter**  
**Swiss, 1890–1984**

Born in Oberhofen, Switzerland, Jakob Greuter spent most of his life in the nearby city of St. Gall. He worked as a locksmith and a garbage collector. He began drawing in the 1920s, and his work depicts military themes and other subjects copied from magazine and newspaper illustrations, complete with accompanying text. In translation, his signature reads, "Fantasy picture by untrained artist Jakob Greuter."

**Anne Grgich**  
**American, b. 1961**

Anne Grgich collects books from the 1950s, on which she paints colorful portraits. These faces are composites of women she has seen in passing, represented with swirling circles for hair, wide eyes, and exaggerated eyelashes. She invents imagery via the generative process of doodling. She started filling books with poetry and sketches as a child and spent hours writing stories and making found-object assemblages, a precursor to her mature sculptures, at her father's workbench.

Grgich was born and grew up in Portland, Oregon. She began to paint and collage when she was fifteen years old. In 1981 she was in a car accident and spent two months in a coma. When she woke up, she had to relearn, over a period of ten years, much that one learns during childhood. Faced with continued misfortunes, she joined a cult and then a punk rock group involved in drugs. After a failed marriage resulting in the birth of her son, she severed her relation to these groups. She attended two art schools for one semester each, then worked at a pizzeria, whose manager encouraged her art practice.

Grgich responded to materials at hand, painting on furniture, linoleum tiles, old records, and twenty-five-foot canvases provided by her friends. Later she sought out specific images from art and antique magazines, cutting these out and arranging them by color to make a palette for her collages. Her work can be seen in dozens of collections, exhibitions, and publications, and she continues to teach throughout the United States.

**William L. Hawkins**  
**American, 1895–1990**

William L. Hawkins was born on July 27, 1895, a fact represented prominently on the distinctive painted frames of his works. Their bright colors and designs reflect his observation of the quilts that his grandmother sewed when he was a child. Hawkins grew up on his grandparents' farm in eastern Kentucky. He taught himself to draw as a boy by copying horse auction announcements and calendar illustrations. He served briefly in World War I before settling in Columbus, Ohio, in 1916.

Hawkins started painting in the 1930s. He worked variously as a truck driver, trapper, horse breaker, house painter, and metal scrap dealer before retiring in the late 1970s and dedicating his time to art making. He applied

house paint with a rough brush on Masonite, wood, metal, cardboard, and found objects. At times he built up his surfaces by mixing sand, fish-tank gravel, or cornmeal into his paint. He collected photographs he took of buildings and animals; images from postcards, calendars, and advertisements; and illustrations from books, especially *The Golden Book of America*.

Magazines, including *Life* and *National Geographic*, and local and national newspapers added to his portrayals of far-off locations and current events. He occasionally appropriated famous artworks, rendering them in his own distinctive style. His *Last Supper* series recasts the racial and gender roles rendered by Leonardo da Vinci. Hawkins associated his talent with his richly diverse racial background—black, white, and Native American—and represented skin tones variously in his paintings, such as the black and green astronauts in *Conquest of the Moon #1* and *Conquest of the Moon #2*.

In 1981 Lee Garrett, an artist living in Columbus, heard about Hawkins and started promoting his work. Hawkins's paintings are now in the collections of many major museums throughout the United States and in Japan

### **Patrick Hayman** **English, 1915–1988**

Patrick Hayman imbued his paintings and poetry with symbolism and allusions to myth, history, and literature, often creating allegories that comment on contemporary events. An avid reader, Hayman developed a keen interest in art and literature at a young age, which resulted in a lifetime of making as well as his founding and editing of a literary magazine and an international journal of the visual arts.

Hayman grew up in London. His work evinces a deep connection with several locales, especially the aura of the frontier in New Zealand and North America, and a sensitivity to the plight of those colonized. After studying at prestigious private schools in England, he sailed in 1936 to New Zealand, where his parents and the previous five generations of his family were from. There he began his painting career as a part-time student at King Edward Technical College in Dunedin. In 1940 he enrolled at Victoria University in Wellington, where he frequented the libraries to study such luminaries as Thomas Hart Benton, Albert Pinkham Ryder, and Grant Wood.

Hayman returned to England in 1947. He had his first exhibition later that year at the London Gallery, which largely exhibited Dada and Surrealism. His wordplay and his dreamlike paintings of female nudes, ships at sea, flying machines, long-beaked birds, revolutionary heroes, and (though he was Jewish) Christian stories fit well with Surrealist strategies. In 1953 *Gallery One*—directed at that time by Victor Musgrave, a champion of “art brut”—held Hayman's first solo show in London.

Hayman and his wife lived in Cabris Bay, near St. Ives, for several years in the 1950s and 1960s. The landscapes and seascapes, which reminded him of New Zealand, inspired Hayman, as did the artists' community developing at that time. He befriended artist Peter Lanyon and became more familiar with the work of Cornish artist Alfred Wallis, whom he had read about while in New Zealand. His writings note the influence of the many painted wooden boats in the fishing village on the assemblages Wallis made in the late 1960s. These constructions—built with oil paint, board, nails, and scrap metal—reconcile manufactured forms with organic material to create a unified whole.

### **Albert Hoffman** **American, 1915–1993**

Born in Philadelphia, Albert Hoffman left school after the sixth grade and worked at his father's fish market in Atlantic City, New Jersey. While working as a furniture upholsterer's assistant, he learned the foundations of wood carving. He later worked for a cedar chest manufacturer, further honing his woodworking skills. Shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, Hoffman joined the U.S. Navy and was injured in battle. While recuperating at home, he carved small animals from soap. Later, while operating a junk shop in New Jersey, he began making art in earnest. His subject matter includes scenes of daily life and religious and biblical themes.

### **Dora Holzander** **British, b. France 1928**

Born in Paris to parents of Polish Jewish descent, Dora Holzander moved with her family to London in 1934. At the age of nineteen, she enrolled in the Anglo-French Art Centre, located in St. John's Wood, London. While there she met fellow art student George Swinford, and the two were married, moved to Hampstead, and raised

three daughters. Her work was included in the 1949 exhibition *Young Contemporaries* in London and has been exhibited internationally ever since. Her paintings feature gardens, domestic scenes, or scenes from Jewish life and are infused with a sense of mysticism rooted in her study of Buddhism and other Eastern philosophies.

**Mr. Imagination**  
**American, b. 1948**

Mr. Imagination was born Gregory Warmack in Chicago and began making art in the early 1980s, carving figures out of found pieces of industrial sandstone (a by-product of the steel-manufacturing process). He has continued making artworks out of discarded and salvaged materials, including bottle caps, glass and ceramic shards, buttons, spark plugs, paintbrushes, and CDs. The recurring figure in his work bears a striking resemblance to the artist himself. Mr. Imagination has received a number of major commissions, including those from the House of Blues restaurants in Chicago, Las Vegas, and Orlando; from Coca Cola at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta; and from the Chicago Children's Museum.

**Shields Landon Jones**  
**American, 1901–1997**

Shields Landon Jones grew up in Indian Mill, in Franklin County, West Virginia. His parents were sharecroppers who later purchased their own farm in Summers County, West Virginia. As a boy he hunted and whittled animals from wood. He taught himself to play the fiddle and banjo, winning a music contest in his preteens.

In 1918 Jones began working for the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad as a laborer and carpenter. He retired in 1967, when the company switched from steam to diesel-powered locomotives. He had four children with his first wife. After her death in 1969, he built himself a workshop behind his house in Pine Hill, West Virginia, and took up his childhood pastime of carving again. He remarried in 1972.

Jones's early wood sculptures are made of black maple, walnut, and soft yellow poplar wood. His small, expressive figures; foreshortened torsos; and carved heads are of farmers, hunters, fiddlers, and preachers. He carefully defined the details of his humans and animals, first with a bowie knife and later with a chisel and rasp. Having taken a painting class at the YMCA before he retired, Jones also created ink, graphite, pastel, and crayon drawings on paper. Beginning in 1972, he penciled, stained, and painted his sculptures. In the mid-1970s he incorporated opaque paints and started making larger works.

Jones sold his work at a state park and at craft fairs. In 1972 the collector Herbert Waide Hempill Jr., who cofounded the American Folk Art Museum, saw his work at a county fair in West Virginia. Jones's work is now in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C.; the American Folk Art Museum in New York; the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center in Williamsburg, Virginia; the High Museum of Art in Atlanta; and the Rockford Art Museum in Rockford, Illinois. He continued making art into his nineties.

**Rosemarie Koczy**  
**American/Swiss, b. Germany, 1939–2007**

While Rosemarie Koczy was not trained in drawing, the visual acumen she developed in tapestry design and production informed her drawings. In 1975, frustrated with the limitations of tapestry, she began drawing—often with two hands, thanks to her weaving skills—ultimately penning more than twelve thousand ink works memorializing the victims of the Holocaust. Written on the back of her drawings are the words “I Weave You a Shroud.”

Koczy was born in Recklinghausen, Germany. She was deported in 1942 and survived two concentration camps. Her thousand-page memoir of this experience is housed in the Yad Vashem archive in Jerusalem. She moved to Geneva in 1959 to study at the *École des Arts Décoratifs*, graduating with distinction in 1965. She became known in Europe for her tapestries and made hundreds of paintings and wood sculptures. Her work was encouraged by the collector Peggy Guggenheim, Thomas Messer (former director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum), and the artist and collector Jean Dubuffet.

After she married her second husband, the composer Louis Pelosi, in 1984, she moved to Croton-on-Hudson, New York, becoming an American citizen in 1989. Koczy worked in a nursing home and supported the artistic practices of elderly and disabled residents. She also taught art in her studio.

**Bronisław Krawczuk**  
**Polish, 1935–1995**

Born in the village of Panasowka in a former Polish area of Ukraine, Bronisław Krawczuk began his artistic career by painting glass fragments after being inspired by a stained-glass window he saw in a church. In 1957 Krawczuk repatriated to Poland with his wife and children, settling in the industrial town of Gliwice, Silesia. While working odd jobs to support his family, he painted the fields and landscapes of his native village, which contrasted starkly with the smokestacks of Silesia. His work found buyers, and he eventually entered his paintings into local exhibitions. Krawczuk's work is in the collections of several Polish museums.

**Måna Lagerholm**  
**Swedish, 1946–2001**

Måna Lagerholm was born on the southeast coast of Sweden and lived there until 1968, when she moved with her husband to his native England. She enrolled in an art program at Falmouth College of Art in Cornwall, where she worked in a variety of media but eventually settled on painting. After earning her degree, Lagerholm returned to Sweden to an artists' community along the northern coast. Her paintings feature broad areas of vibrant color, as well as recurring human and animal characters.

**Sylvia Levine**  
**English, 1911–1998**

Sylvia Levine began painting in 1956, taking art classes part-time at the West of England School of Art in Queens Road, Bristol, but little heeding the advice of tutors there. While buying supplies for the class, she purchased a flexible palette knife recommended by an employee at the art store. Her penchant for using this tool accounts for the impasto and rough surfaces of her oil paintings. Her subjects include nude figures, portraits, seascapes, still lifes, and the English countryside. She enjoyed frequenting galleries in London and once painted an interior scene of one.

Levine's work was frequently featured in exhibitions held by the Royal Academy and has been shown at the Carl Hammer Gallery in Chicago, the Museum of American Folk Art in New York, and throughout England. She lived in Bristol until her death.

**Tim Lewis**  
**American, b. 1952**

Tim Lewis has lived in the mountains of eastern Kentucky for most of his life. He worked in the mining and logging industries until he was injured in an accident in 1988. After the accident, Lewis took up carving, a skill practiced by several members of his family, and began by carving walking sticks. He works in metal and wood but is best known for his sandstone sculptures. His subjects include religious themes and animals and are often humorous in nature.

**Andrew Litten**  
**English, b. 1970**

Working with everything from gouache and oil paint to hair and screws, Andrew Litten paints and collages expressionistic, isolated figures and figurelike still lifes. No longer interested in the models or other source materials that he encountered in art school, Litten is stimulated by the many works in his studio and by the activity of art making—assembling, scoring texture into surfaces, and manipulating the material qualities of paint.

Litten was born in Aylesbury, England. At the age of sixteen, he began taking evening classes in life drawing. Later, studying illustration at Amersham College of Art led to a job at Ginn book publishing in Aylesbury. He lived in London in the 1990s and later moved to Oxford, where he worked as a photographic assistant.

Litten hit his stride when he moved, with his wife and two children, to Cornwall in 2001. Two galleries in Penzance, Cornwall, Dick the Dog and Goldfish Fine Art, frequently exhibit his work. Litten's work has also been



featured in solo exhibitions in London, Dublin, and New York and in various group shows and art fairs. In 2010 his work was included in *No Soul for Sale* at the Tate Modern. Litten recently exhibited with Wilson Williams Gallery at the 2011 Venice Biennale.

**James Lloyd**  
**English, 1905–1974**

Frederick James Lloyd grew up on a farm in Alsager, a town in the county of Cheshire in England. As a young man, he worked variously as a farm laborer, builder's laborer, stoker, lamplighter, bus conductor, and police officer. He married in 1931 and had a son, but he and his wife separated after Lloyd returned from voluntary military service in North Africa and Italy. Lloyd remarried at age forty-two and fathered nine children. Working to support his family during the day, he painted in the evenings at his kitchen table—a surface that influenced the size of his works.

Lloyd had made black ink drawings in his youth and started making art again when his family could not afford Christmas cards one year. Many small strokes make up his gouache and watercolor paintings of the people, farm animals, yellow-green grasses, and clouded skies of rural England. Studying reproductions of works of John Constable and Joseph Mallord William Turner led him to develop a pointillist technique inspired by the colored dots that made up these printed images.

Although the community near York where Lloyd and his family lived did not value his art, his wife, Nancy, brought his work to an appreciative audience by contacting British art critic Sir Herbert Read. Read and art critic John Berger went to see Lloyd and purchased many works. London gallerist Arthur Jeffress contacted Lloyd in order to exhibit his work. His work was subsequently represented by Portal Gallery in London. Thanks to his success, Lloyd lived to see the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) air a documentary on him in 1964. He also played French painter Henri Rousseau in a BBC film, and traveled to the Netherlands, Yugoslavia, and other parts of the world. Lloyd died in Skirpenbeck, near York. His work is now in the Tate Gallery and in many other European and American collections.

**Albert Loudon**  
**English, b. 1943**

Albert Loudon was born in Blackpool, England, and grew up in the East End of London. When he was fifteen years old, he left school to work, first helping a furrier and later driving a van. He started drawing and painting in watercolor at age nineteen and went on to create works with pastel and oil paint.

Loudon creates surreal hybrid figures with facial features that may double as another figure or an animal. Known for its brightly colored, outlined figures and pared-down landscapes, his work has become increasingly abstract. He never titles his works.

Ignoring the expectations of “outsider” artists, of which he is well aware, Loudon enjoys his success, frequenting museums and galleries and looking at catalogues. He especially appreciates works by Scottie Wilson, Francis Bacon, and L. S. Lowry and has a collection of books on nineteenth- and twentieth-century art. Loudon's work has been featured in seminal group exhibitions, including *Outsiders* at the Hayward Gallery in 1979 and *Artists Make Faces*, a show featuring trained and self-taught artists organized by Victor Musgrave and Monika Kinley in 1983. The Serpentine Gallery in London sold all his works featured in a solo exhibition in 1985. Loudon lives and works in London.

**Dwight Mackintosh**  
**American, 1906–1999**

Dwight Mackintosh hailed from Hayward, California. At the age of sixteen, he was diagnosed with mental retardation and institutionalized in Sonoma State Hospital. In 1947 he was transferred to De Witt State Hospital in Auburn and finally to Stockton State Hospital in 1972, spending a total of fifty-six years in hospitals. In classes at the Alan Short Center at Stockton State Hospital, he demonstrated an interest in and aptitude for drawing, and after his release in 1978 (as part of a mass release of patients), he registered for art classes at the Creative Growth Art Center in Oakland, California, which provides adult artists with disabilities with a professional studio environment for five days a week. Mackintosh devoted himself to drawing with great concentration.

Mackintosh's early drawings, made with black felt-tip pen, feature male figures, buildings, and calligraphic, largely indecipherable script. As he continued working, he experimented with colored pencils, watercolor, and chalk, creating works of great variety though adding only a few more subjects—including musical instruments, animals, and automobiles—to his repertoire. In his later years he had several strokes, and this altered the quality of his lines, which took on a rippling effect. His work has been shown in exhibitions throughout the United States and is held in major American and European collections.

**Jahan Maka**  
**Canadian, b. Lithuania, 1900–1987**

Jahan Maka's paintings reflect the countryside and tumultuous history of his native Lithuania, the history of Canada, current events, and places that he imagined. His brightly colored shrubbery, architectural structures—which sometimes double as framing devices—and the figures that inhabit this world are frontal and flattened yet viewed from an aerial perspective. (Critic and collector Michael Hall notes affinities between Maka's subjects and compositional structure—seemingly floating figures surrounded by decorative fields of color and activity—and those of Marc Chagall, who had also experienced peasant life in rural Lithuania.)<sup>1</sup>

Jahan Maka was born Jonas Tomasiunas-Tomosenskas. His father died when Maka was young, leaving him, as the oldest son, to tend the family's farm in the small village of Svedasai amid turmoil over the occupation of the Baltic region. The farm was lost, due to either border shifts or land allocation, after World War I. In 1927 Maka immigrated to Canada seeking work, intending to return to Lithuania and buy a farm. He changed his name to John Thomason. He retained his roots by reading newspapers in his native tongue and kept in contact with other Lithuanian immigrants, who, in his last years, often visited him while he worked and—evidence suggests—sometimes contributed marks to sections of his artworks.

In Canada, Maka worked as an itinerant laborer in the western provinces until he settled in Flin Flon, Manitoba, where he worked as a hard rock miner until he retired in 1965. His godson, Tony Allison, an art student at the University of Manitoba, encouraged him to paint and brought supplies to supplement Maka's inventive use of industrial materials. He signed his works with the name Maka because it was a special clan name given to him in his youth. After a decade, his work began to receive recognition. Winning first prize in a juried art exhibition sponsored by the Northern Manitoba Recreational Association in 1977 resulted in two solo exhibitions in Winnipeg the following year. During a road trip with Allison to the southern United States and Mexico in the spring of 1983, Maka purchased the chalk, crayon, paint, and black paper used for his celebrated last series of drawings. Maka continued painting until his death.

Notes

1. Michael D. Hall, "Jahan Maka: Symbolist on the Precambrian Shield," in *The Artist Outsider: Creativity and the Boundaries of Culture* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994), 127–28.

**Justin McCarthy**  
**American, 1891/92–1977**

Justin McCarthy grew up in a wealthy family in Weatherly, Pennsylvania. After his younger brother died of pneumonia in 1907, the family sought consolation by visiting Europe and its museums. McCarthy's father, a newspaper executive and investor, died in 1908, possibly committing suicide due to the death of his son and his financial losses in the Panic of 1907. McCarthy's mother raised him and sent him to the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He failed his second-year exams and left school. McCarthy suffered a nervous breakdown and was admitted to a Pennsylvania state psychiatric hospital in 1915. Toward the end of the five years that he remained in the hospital, McCarthy began drawing. When he was released, he returned to live with his mother in the family's large home. He helped manage a local baseball team; worked variously at a warehouse, a cement company, and as a chocolate mixer; and peddled liniment and produce that he grew. He worked at Bethlehem Steel during World War II and later as an aide at the hospital in which he was formerly a patient. When he was dismissed, he took up peddling again.

McCarthy started making ink line drawings and paintings around 1920 and continued through the 1970s. His expressionistic paintings evince his fascination with cinema and Hollywood stars. He also painted sports figures, scenes from the Bible, landscapes, and still lifes in watercolor, acrylic, and oil. He peddled his own works, nailing them to fences or laying them on lawns, and his prices were high for an unknown artist. Artists and collectors Dorothy and Sterling Strauser first collected and promoted McCarthy's work after seeing it in an art show in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, in 1962.

After his mother died in 1940, McCarthy lived alone in the family home until his death. During his lifetime, McCarthy's work was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art and the Museum of American Folk Art in New York and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia.

**Michel Nedjar**  
**French, b. 1947**

Michel Nedjar's acrylic, wax, and oil pastel works on paper feature animals, figures, skulls, and masklike faces reduced to a few elemental, highly textured shapes. He also makes figural sculptures out of cloth and has a long history in fiber-related crafts.

Nedjar grew up in a large Jewish family in Soisy, a suburb of Paris. His father was a tailor. At the age of fourteen, he left school to become an apprentice tailor, qualifying for a fashion diploma four years later. He contracted tuberculosis while serving in the military.

Once he recovered, Nedjar traveled to Morocco, Algeria, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, India, Nepal, Belize, Guatemala, and twice to Mexico, where the dolls sold in markets particularly fascinated him. When he returned to Paris in 1976, Nedjar worked at his grandmother's stall in a flea market. There he started making dolls and animals out of rags, tree roots, and other found materials. He went on to create papier-mâché figures with glass bottle bases, paintings on everything from canvas to record sleeves, and experimental films. In 1982 he cofounded a museum dedicated to art brut, which is now the L'Aracine collection at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Lille Métropole. Nedjar continues to work in Paris.

**Nikifor**  
**Polish, 1895–1968**

Nikifor was born in Krynica, Poland. His real name is thought to be Epifan Drowniak. He descended from a Ukrainian tribe called Lemko, which incited the prejudice of some Polish citizens. He did not know his father, and his mother died while he was still young, leaving him destitute and further burdened by a speech impediment. Nikifor started painting when a doctor gave him a set of watercolors. By the age of thirteen, he was selling his paintings—made with watercolor, gouache, crayon, and later pencil on discarded paper and cigarette packs—on the street. He stamped the name “Nikifor-Matejko,” the surname of a famous Polish painter, on the back of his paintings.

Traveling on foot and hopping trains, Nikifor explored Poland, observing the countryside, architecture, and religious practices, making sketches for thousands of mostly small-scale paintings. His source material included illustrations of Secession architecture that he collected. The structure of and the religious paintings inside Poland's Orthodox and Catholic churches informed his visions of heaven and hell. Devoutly religious, he believed that artists, as creators, would have a special place in heaven. He painted himself as a bishop, judge, and artist.

Nikifor received some recognition for his work in the 1930s but generally lived in poverty. A few exhibitions were held in 1948. Ella and Andrzej Banach worked to exhibit Nikifor's paintings in Paris and other European cities from 1959 to the early 1960s. On this occasion, established artist Marian Wlosinski, who worked for the communist state and housed Nikifor in his studio starting in 1960, helped him get a passport under the name Nikifor Krynicky, meaning “Nikifor from Krynica,” for his only trip abroad, in 1962. He attended a large retrospective of his work at Warsaw's Zachęta Art Gallery, one of the country's most important museums, in 1969. Nikifor died in Folsz and was buried in Krynica, where the Nikifor Museum opened in 1995.

**David Pearce**  
**English, b. 1963**

David Pearce grew up in the small fishing village of Padstow, Cornwall, and aspired to be an artist from an early age. He admired the work of fellow Cornish artist Alfred Wallis, also represented in the Petullo Collection. The depiction of light and atmosphere in his paintings recalls the Cornish landscape. The simple and direct brushstrokes give his work a feeling of spontaneity and an aesthetic subtlety that belies his seemingly crude technique. Pearce's work has been exhibited internationally since 1998.

**Perifimou**  
**British, b. Cyprus, 1916–2001**

Alexander Georgiou adopted the name Perifimou, which is derived from his father's nickname, Periaphimous, meaning "the famous one." He was born in a village outside Nicosia, Cyprus, and moved to Brixton, in south London, in 1935, beginning to work as a chef and tailor. While serving in Italy, Malta, and North Africa during World War II, he developed a skin disease that prevented him from working for many years. In 1973 a recommendation from the Royal British Legion helped him gain employment as a gallery guard at the Royal Academy of Arts and then at the Tate Gallery until he retired at the age of sixty-five.

Perifimou appreciated works by William Blake and, at age fifty-nine, began drawing while working in the gallery, generating imagery for his paintings by doodling. The flatness of his figures brings them boldly to the surface. The strong shapes and colors of Perifimou's nudes and oversize animals guide the viewer's eye around his paintings' compositions, reinforcing the movement implied by the subjects' body language. The active stance of these simple, iconic forms evokes the climax of an archetypal narrative.

Victor Musgrave, a curator based in London, observed Perifimou at work while visiting the Tate. In 1990 Georgiou and his wife moved to the country, where he lived until his death. In his will, he left much of his work to the village where he grew up.

**Josef Karl Rädler**  
**Austrian, 1844–1917**

Joseph Karl Rädler was born in Sokolov, Bohemia (now part of the Czech Republic). At age twenty-three he moved to Vienna and worked as a porcelain painter. He eventually opened his own shop, married, and had four children. Inclined toward mood swings, he incurred many expenses and lawsuits. He was institutionalized in an asylum at Pilgerhain in 1893 and was transferred to a sanatorium in Mauer-Öhling, Austria, in 1905. Rädler was diagnosed with "secondary dementia" (similar to what is now referred to as schizophrenia), but his symptoms may have been related to latent epilepsy, as he experienced seizures later in life.

Beginning in 1897, Rädler spent much of his time painting. He also read Goethe's letters, quoted Confucius to his fellow patients, and incited the prejudice of his caretakers and fellow patients by expressing confidence in his artistic and philosophical abilities beyond the strictures of his class. Birds and small script figure prominently in his work. After moving to the sanatorium, he added the hospital, gardens, and patients to his watercolor and gouache paintings.

Rädler died in Mauer-Öhling. His works were saved by one of the doctors and by the husband of a nurse whose heirs brought one hundred watercolors to psychiatrist Leo Navratil in 1972. Navratil, who had established the House of Artists at Maria Gugging, organized the first exhibition of Rädler's paintings in Vienna in 1994 and donated his work to the Niederösterreichisches Landesmuseum. Rädler's work was exhibited at Galerie St. Etienne in New York in 2001 and at the Wellcome Collection in London in 2009.

**Max Raffler**  
**German, 1902–1988**

Max Raffler's paintings portray farm life in the village of Griefenberg, in Bavaria, a region of southern Germany, where he was born and spent his entire life. His father was mayor of the village from 1911 to 1930. After his parents died, Raffler and his two sisters ran the family farm. Raffler's sisters disparaged his art making and destroyed many of his paintings. He wrote poems as well, which are also lost.

A priest encouraged Raffler to paint religious scenes and displayed them in the local church. Inspired by rural shrines, devotional images, and Baroque church art, Raffler created many religious works, including his celebrated Stations of the Cross for the Maria am Wege church in Windach. His popular paintings of cats were reproduced in a book. Other subjects include still lifes, self-portraits, landscapes, local scenes, and everyday objects. His works are in many collections and have been exhibited in Munich, Zurich, Amsterdam, and Chicago.

**Martín Ramírez**  
**Mexican, 1895–1963**

The folk art of his native Mexico, the Madonnas carved in the church near where he grew up, and the gun-toting horseback riders of the West animate Martín Ramírez's 440 known drawings and collages.

Ramírez was born in Jalisco, Mexico. He worked as a rancher and laundry cleaner before he immigrated to the United States from Tepetitlan, Mexico, in 1925 in order to find work and send money home to his wife and four children to pay off his purchase of a small farm. In Northern California, he worked for six years on railroads and in mines, and these experiences would shape in his drawings.

In 1931 Los Angeles authorities picked him up for vagrancy. Distressed by his misfortunes and unable to speak English, he was misdiagnosed as demented and interned in the Stockton State Hospital in Stockton, California. In 1948 he was moved into the tuberculosis ward at DeWitt State Hospital in Auburn, California, where he continued to live and make art until his death.

Tarmo Pasto, an artist and visiting professor from Sacramento State College who was researching creativity and psychology, started collecting Ramírez's work in 1949. Incredibly inventive with materials available at the hospital, Ramírez drew on examining-table paper, brown paper bags, cups, and book pages he glued together with a paste made of potatoes and saliva and collaged with pictures from magazines. He used a tongue depressor as a straightedge. Pasto started bringing him materials such as graphite, colored pencil, and crayon. Ramírez melted the crayon on a radiator and applied it, like paint, with a matchstick to create rugged lines. He emphasized the perspective created by the many parallel lines that he composed by directing viewers on where to stand. Following a retrospective of Ramírez's work at the American Folk Art Museum in 2007, descendants of a doctor at DeWitt brought forward more than 120 previously unknown drawings.

**Winfred Rembert**  
**American, b. 1945**

Winfred Rembert was born in Cuthbert, Georgia, and his work recalls the many people, places, and events of his southern childhood. Scenes of cotton picking or tobacco harvesting, as well as figures from the artist's life or from the popular culture at large, are depicted in paintings done on tooled and carved leather. Rembert currently resides in New Haven, Connecticut.

**Helen Salzberg**  
**American, b. 1923**

Born in New York state, Helen Salzberg has worked in painting, sculpture, and collage throughout her career. Her paintings depict biblical subject matter, primarily from the Old Testament, and feature rich colors and warm light.

**John "Jack" Savitsky**  
**American, 1910–1991**

John Savitsky was born in New Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and began working in the coal mines at a very early age. He continued working in the mines for thirty-five years, until 1960, when black lung disease forced him to retire. In retirement, Savitsky began painting and drawing images from his years in the mining industry. His work consists of bold, heavy lines filled with broad areas of unmixed colors. Savitsky continued to make his art until his death in 1991.

**Joe Scarborough**  
**English, b. 1938**

Joe Scarborough was born in Sheffield, England. At sixteen, he went to work in a factory, and then in a coal mine, dabbling in art on the side. After a mining accident, Scarborough turned to painting full time and worked odd jobs on the side. His work depicts scenes of life in South Yorkshire in vibrant colors and specific detail, often with a humorous tone.

**Arnold Schmidt**  
**Austrian, b. 1959**

Born in Austria, Arnold Schmidt began treatment in 1986 at the House of Artists, a residential community of psychiatric patients with serious artistic practices, at Maria Gugging, near Vienna. His figures and faces, usually composed of several symmetrical circles, pulse with the movement of a quick hand. He layers loosely applied color over carefully composed sketches. Although an assistant helps him set up, he works alone. He renders his figures using acrylic, crayon, pencil, colored pencil, and watercolor, centering them on empty backgrounds. Schmidt attends local exhibitions with fellow artists at Maria Gugging. His work has been exhibited in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and the United States.

**Friedrich Schröder-Sonnenstern**  
**German, b. Lithuania, 1892–1982**

Friedrich Schröder-Sonnenstern's allegorical drawings, made in pencil and crayon layered over paint washes, are charged with symbolism and sexuality. The shapes of the many eyes—looking out from unexpected places—of the slyly grinning, hybrid creatures in these surreal works seem to suggest female anatomy.

Born in Kaukehmen (renamed Kuckerneese in 1938), Lithuania, Schröder-Sonnenstern was the second of thirteen children. His father was a postal official and alcoholic. At the age of fourteen, Friedrich was sent to a home for delinquents and subsequently to several correctional institutions. In 1910 he was accused of stealing from a farm where he worked. After he pulled out a knife during his arrest, he was committed to a psychiatric hospital for five months, an experience that inspired him to write poems condemning social injustice. Schröder-Sonnenstern was institutionalized again in 1917 for smuggling while working for the postal service. He used some of his profits from working as a healer, astrologer, and clairvoyant to buy sandwiches for victims of inflation in the 1920s. Hospitalized again in 1930 for debts and for posing as a medical doctor, he met an artist and started drawing in 1933.

After his release, Schröder-Sonnenstern lived in Berlin with his companion until her death in 1964. He sold wood to make money, then began actively making art when excess fluid accumulation around his knee joint temporarily prevented him from walking. He able to earn a living from sale of his work, and during his lifetime, exhibitions were held throughout Germany and in Paris and Tokyo. Schröder-Sonnenstern died in West Berlin. In 2011 a major survey of his work at Michael Werner Gallery in New York enjoyed critical acclaim.

**Volkmar Schulz-Rumpold**  
**German, b. 1956**

Born in the Spandau district of Berlin, Volkmar Schulz-Rumpold held a variety of different jobs before becoming an artist. He worked for the Deutsche Reichsbahn, the East German state railway, from 1974 to 1981. He also owned a pub in Berlin and held odd jobs in and around Bremen, including working as a cemetery caretaker. He began making art in 1985 and had his first exhibition at Galerie Roche in Bremen in 1986. Since 1991 he has lived and worked north of Berlin and has continued to show his work throughout Europe.

**Gérard Sendrey**  
**French, b. 1928**

Gérard Sendrey was born in Caudéran, France. He studied law before working as a civil servant in Bègles, outside Bourdeaux, until 1988. Sendrey began making art in the late 1960s, focusing on painting for a decade and then on drawings made with numerous crosshatched lines. His varied oeuvre includes figures splashed with many colors of paint as well as monochrome images of pared-down creatures, outlined against black backgrounds. Recent black ink drawings on white paper integrate random and deliberate marks.

Michel Thévoz, curator of the Musée de l'Art in Lausanne, Switzerland (founded by artist Jean Dubuffet), hailed the first exhibition of Sendrey's work, in 1979 at the Galerie du Fleuve in Paris. The following year, his work was acquired by the Musée de l'Art Brut and has since entered many collections. In 1989 Sendrey founded his own organization, Site de la Création Franche, to encourage fellow self-taught artists. It is now an official museum in Bègles.

**Jon Serl**  
**American, 1894–1993**

The tragicomedy of Jon Serl's paintings reflects the artist's talent as a performer on stage and in life, as he fluidly changed his occupation, location, and identity. Serl, whose original name was Joe Searles, was born on an Indian reservation in Cattaraugus County, New York. When he was ten years old, Serl began performing in his family's traveling vaudeville show. Traveling west through the mining camps in Colorado and eventually Hollywood, he waited tables; picked cherries; dubbed voices for silent films (signed by Fox Studios as Jerry Palmer, one of several names he used); and held jobs as an actor, dancer, and screenwriter. Although he did not attend school for very long, avid reading contributed to his extensive vocabulary and fine diction, earning him voiceover jobs for early talkies.

Serl befriended stars and curators as readily as runaways. He married and divorced three times and had two children. After World War II, he moved to the California desert, where he collected objects from garage sales and flea markets. When he moved to San Juan Capistrano in 1949, he started painting with homemade pigments and oil paint he applied to found boards, Masonite, and canvas, as well as to discarded paintings. He created more than 1,200 works featuring wide-eyed, slim figures with bendy limbs reminiscent of the work of Edvard Munch. Incredibly self-sufficient, he took up gardening, grew his own crops, and raised chickens. He refused to exhibit his work until the 1970s and often did not cash checks for the sale of his work, mounting them instead on his kitchen wall. In 1970 the Municipal Arts Department of Los Angeles toured an exhibition of forty-one of his paintings. Calvin-Morris Gallery became his New York dealer. In 1971 Serl moved to Lake Elsinore, in Riverside County, California, where he lived until his death.

**Carter Todd**  
**American, 1947–2004**

Carter Todd left school at an early age and spent many years doing odd jobs, including running a popcorn stand at the Indianapolis Speedway and working as a gas station attendant and a short-order cook. As an adult, he suffered from epilepsy and other maladies linked to alcoholism. It was during a stay in a center for alcohol treatment that Todd began to draw. His subject matter was narrowly focused on architectural structures and referred to buildings he either knew firsthand or saw on television. His drawing style featured a multiplicity of perspectives and precise detail in its architectural components.

**Bill Traylor**  
**American, 1854–1949**

Bill Traylor's drawings of silhouetted humans and animals on cardboard pithily communicate a telling expression or gesture. Traylor spent the first eight decades of his life on the George Hartwell Traylor cotton plantation near Benton, Alabama, where he was born into slavery. Witness to great historical changes, he remembered Union soldiers plundering and burning the plantation in 1865. He stayed at the plantation as a sharecropper after the Civil War, married in 1891, and raised nine children.

In 1935, after the plantation owners had died and his children had moved away, Traylor moved to Montgomery, Alabama, and worked in a shoe factory. When rheumatism prevented him from working there, he received government assistance checks and slept in the back room of the Ross-Clayton Funeral Home. In the spring of 1939 a young artist, Charles Shannon, noticed Traylor drawing with pencils on found pieces of cardboard, near a blacksmith's shop on Monroe Avenue. Traylor drew tools, animals, and the many passersby in the busy shopping area near the train station and sold his works for small amounts. Shannon began visiting him and bringing him paper, ink, pens, and crayons. Traylor experimented with color but continued to work on cardboard, carefully composing his figures with a straightedge.

Shannon and his colleagues, members of the New South movement, exhibited roughly one hundred of Traylor's works at their gallery in 1940. Shannon took Traylor's drawings to New York in 1941. There friends put him in touch with the director of the Department of Education at the Museum of Modern Art, who organized a 1942 exhibition of Traylor's work at the Ethical Culture Fieldston School in Riverdale, New York. In the same year, Traylor moved to Washington, D.C., with his daughter, then visited his children in Detroit, Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia before returning to Montgomery. He died at St. Jude Hospital in Montgomery.

### **Oswald Tschirtner** **Austrian, 1920–2007**

Born in Perchtoldsdorf, Austria, Oswald Tschirtner was raised by a devoutly Catholic aunt and uncle in Vienna. He graduated from high school with honors. He wanted to become a priest and enrolled in a seminary. Drafted in 1939, he was captured and held as a prisoner of war in France until 1946. Following these experiences, he showed signs of distress and was institutionalized at the psychiatric hospital in Maria Gugging, near Vienna, in 1954. There Dr. Leo Navratil encouraged him to draw. The forms of cephalopods inspired his early pen-and-ink drawings, from the late 1960s. These developed into his distinctive elongated groups of figures—their similar forms creating a patternlike, graphic quality—celebrated for their economy of line. He moved to the House of Artists at Maria Gugging, founded by Navratil, when it opened in 1981 and spent the rest of his life there.

### **Shafique Uddin** **British, b. Bangladesh, 1962**

Shafique Uddin's dense, colorful paintings reflect his early childhood in Borbobari, Bangladesh. He moved to England to live with his brother when he was nine years old. By the age of seventeen, he had his first exhibition, at the Whitechapel Gallery in London. He enrolled in Sir John Cass School of Art in 1984. His work has been featured in many exhibitions, including Outsider Art at Tate Britain in 2005.

### **Pascal Verbena** **French, b. 1941**

Pascal Verbena was born in Marseille. Crypts in an early Christian church there inspire his sculptures. He first started carving while working on a freight ship along the coast of Africa from 1957 to 1962. Two years after returning to Marseille, he married and had a child. Verbena collects driftwood, bark, and stones from the shore of the Mediterranean Sea for his sculptures. Working in his studio near the docks of Marseille, he crafts these into the wall boxes that he calls Habitacles, which often take the shape of triptychs with narrow doors opening out at angles that beckon inward. Close inspection of these works reveals secret compartments, levers, and poetry. Many are made of old desks discarded from the post office where Verbena worked from 1964 until he retired in 1992. An avid fisherman, he made his own glue out of fish bones. He started painting in 1966 and also designed a set and sculpture for a theater. His work was first exhibited at Jacob Gallery L'Atelier in Paris in 1978 and has since been shown in Marseille, London, Munich, New York, and Vence, France.



**Jephan de Villiers**  
**French, b. 1940**

Jephan de Villiers's sculptures are made of dried natural materials that he collects from the Sonian Forest in Brussels and the shores of Long Island, New York. Because de Villiers responds to and preserves these materials but does little to alter them, the overall texture and palette of his work are true to the dryness and earthy tones of autumn. The exception is his small carvings of light-colored, masklike faces. With these he assembles vignettes—part of a mythical realm that he named Arbonia and has worked on for decades—with groups of standing figures, some winged, staring wide-eyed, open-mouthed, as if they are witnessing a historically momentous or transcendent event. These nomads bear the history and memories of their culture in the form of scrolls, tools, and packages on boats and carts. A master of the dramatic scene, de Villiers also designs theater sets.

De Villiers was born in Chesnay, France. He grew up observing his natural surroundings and seeing the works of Constantin Brancusi, Alberto Giacometti, and Ossip Zadkine at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris. In a poem, an older de Villiers remembers his childhood illness and, confined to his room, imagines scenes of the outside world and his desire to be in nature. He has lived and worked in London, Brussels, and the Gironde region, in southwestern France, and has installed his work at places of spiritual import around the world, such as the source of the Ganges at Gaumukh, in the Himalayas

**Eugene Von Bruenchenhein**  
**American, 1910–1983**

Although unrecognized for his art during his lifetime, Eugene Von Bruenchenhein was well aware of his many talents. The plaque above his kitchen door read, "Eugene Von Bruenchenhein, Freelance Artist—Poet and Sculptor—Inovator, Arrow maker and Plant man—Bone artifacts constructor—Photographer and Architect—Philosopher." After working in the greenhouse and bakery by day, he devoted his evenings to creating thousands of works: photographs, paintings, poetry, delicate sculptures formed from fowl bones, and ceramic masks and vessels made from clay that he dug and fired in his own hearth.

Born in Marinette, Wisconsin, Von Bruenchenhein was raised by his father, a sign painter, and his stepmother, a former schoolteacher who wrote pamphlets about philosophical and spiritual topics and who painted for pleasure. In 1943 he

married Eveline "Marie" Kalk, who became the subject of glamorous photographs in which she donned ornamental and exotic costumes, including crowns and jewelry made by the artist. Von Bruenchenhein's perspective is intimate and adoring, and he occasionally layered two negatives to soften the image of his muse. His collection of slides and photographs of 1940s pinup models and atomic tests in the Marshall Islands also inspired him.

Von Bruenchenhein's H-Bomb series of varnished paintings reflect his interest in science. He explored many media and used his fingers and various tools—including combs, a hairbrush, sticks, and leaves—to scratch pigment onto cardboard and Masonite coated with white enamel. After his death, a friend of Von Bruenchenhein's, a police officer named Daniel Nycz, brought his work to the attention of the Milwaukee Art Museum, which in turn contacted the John Michael Kohler Arts Center. His work is now in the collections of many museums across the United States and was recently highlighted in solo exhibitions at the American Folk Art Museum in New York and Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art in Chicago.

**August Walla**  
**Austrian, 1936–2001**

The painter, draftsman, and photographer August Walla was born in Klosterneuburg. He was an only child and, after his father's death, grew up with his mother and grandmother. From a young age, he decorated houses, streets, and trees with invented gods and creatures. He was a frequent inpatient at the psychiatric hospital in Maria Gugging in the 1950s and moved into the House of Artists there in 1983. He painted the walls and ceiling of his room, which are reconstructed at the Museum Moderner Kunst in Vienna.

Infusing his work with political insignia and characters from the foreign dictionaries that he collected, Walla forged his own symbolic order for the mythical world that he created. He documented the progress of his work in a diary and in photographs.

## **Alfred Wallis** **English, 1855–1942**

Alfred Wallis's paintings reflect his deep knowledge of ships and their rigging. He began working as a cabin boy at age nine and later served as a cook on deep-sea schooners, which were no longer in use by the time he began painting them due to the decline of the fishing industry in Cornwall. Wallis commented on a painting of boats with fish beneath them, "Each boat of that fleet had a soul, a beautiful soul shaped like a fish; so they [sic] fish I've painted aren't fish at all."<sup>1</sup> Working from memory, he also painted harbors, bridges, forests, and animals. A daily reader of the Bible, he occasionally depicted religious scenes.

In 1876, when he married a widow twenty-three years his senior, Wallis listed "Mariner, Merchant Service" as his profession. He also worked as an inshore fisherman. After he and his family moved to St. Ives, Cornwall, in 1887, he worked as a marine stores dealer. His wife died in 1922, and Wallis started painting three years later. In 1928 he met Ben Nicholson and Christopher Wood, younger trained artists who promoted his work. They were particularly impressed by how Wallis composed pictures in response to irregular pieces of cardboard, sometimes trimming the shapes to create a more desirable effect. He also painted the walls, tabletop, trays, cups, and bellows in his home. Although his work was appreciated and shown in several exhibitions and publications during his lifetime, he received little financial gain. In 1941 he was taken to the Penwith District workhouse, where he died a year later. Moved by the fact that the artist spent his last days in a workhouse, Sven Berlin wrote the first biography of Wallis in 1949.

Wallis's work continues to gain recognition and was celebrated in the 1999–2000 exhibition *Two Painters: Works by Alfred Wallis and James Dixon* at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, which traveled to the Tate Gallery St. Ives.

### Notes

1. George Melly, introduction to *Alfred Wallis: Paintings from St. Ives* (London: Redstone Press, 1990), 15.

## **Scottie Wilson** **Scottish, 1891–1972**

Louis Freeman (who later changed his name to Robert "Scottie" Wilson) grew up in a tenement room-and-kitchen in Glasgow and left home at the age of nine to be a drummer boy in the army, where he acquired the nickname "Scottie," commonly applied to Scottish soldiers.

Scottie Wilson's early drawings were populated by malevolent figures that he described as "evils and greedies." He started creating his totemlike figures and patterns, often built up of parallel lines, in his secondhand shop in Toronto. Years later, Wilson described how he was listening to Mendelssohn when "all of a sudden I dipped the bulldog pen into a bottle of ink and started drawing—doodling I suppose you'd call it—on the cardboard tabletop."<sup>1</sup> His later works are benevolent, decorative depictions of nature, especially birds, fish, flowers, and fauna, which (perhaps coincidentally) happen also to be the three major components of the crest of Glasgow, where he spent much of his childhood. He also designed and hand painted earthenware with the same iconography for England's Royal Worcester Porcelain Company. Artists André Breton and Pablo Picasso were early collectors of his now widely sought-after work.

### Notes

1. Helen Marzolf, *Scottie Wilson: The Canadian Drawings* (Regina, Saskatchewan: Dunlop Art Gallery, 1989), 8.

## **Adolf Wölfli** **Swiss, 1864–1930**

The graphite and colored pencil drawings of Adolf Wölfli center on the protagonist of his narrative, Saint Adolf II, along with snakes, rows of detailed patterns, text, and musical compositions that the artist played on a cardboard trumpet. His epic, *The Saint Adölf-Giant-Creation*, comprises more than forty albums of text and drawings that amount to about 20,000 pages. He also wrote and illustrated a nine-volume, 2,970-page semiautobiographical mythological work called *From the Cradle to the Grave*.

Wölfli was born in Bern, Switzerland. His father abandoned his family when he was five years old, and his mother died when he was eight. Wölfli faced harsh treatment working as a child hireling in Zäziwil but managed to do well in school, completing his basic education at the age of fifteen. After a failed romance, imprisonment for

molesting a young girl, and a repeat offense, he was committed to the Waldau Psychiatric Clinic in Bern, where he remained until his death.

Dr. Walter Morganthaler, a psychiatrist at the clinic, encouraged him to make single-sheet drawings to sell so that he could buy more pencils and paper and the tobacco he chewed while he worked. Wölfli took the suggestion, calling these drawings his “bread art.” Morganthaler published a monograph on Wölfli in 1921.

When French artist Jean Dubuffet visited the Waldau collection in 1945, he acquired a sheaf of Wölfli’s drawings. That autumn, the drawings Dubuffet bought became the basis for the first solo exhibition of Wölfli’s work, held in Paris. Years after his death, Waldau doctor Theodor Spoerri and his wife, Elka Spoerri, greatly contributed to the collating, transcribing, and exhibiting of his works and helped with his retrospective at Documenta 5 in Kassel, Germany, in 1972. Wölfli’s works from Waldau and the Morganthaler collection were moved to the Adolf Wölfli Foundation at the Kunstmuseum Bern in Switzerland in 1975.

### **Joseph E. Yoakum American, 1890–1972**

Wide travels and scenes from National Geographic magazine inspired Joseph E. Yoakum’s landscapes of sinuous mountains and clouds, cavernous valleys engulfing neat rows of trees, and perfectly rounded suns.

Yoakum’s mother was French American, and his father was of Cherokee and African American descent. He was born in Ash Grove, Missouri. He began grooming horses for the Great Wallace Circus in 1900 and worked for several others between 1901 and 1908, including Ringling Brothers and Buffalo Bill Cody’s Wild West Show, which toured Europe from 1903 to 1906.

Yoakum returned to Ash Grove in 1908 and married two years later. He and his wife moved to her hometown of Fort Scott, Kansas, in 1915. Yoakum was drafted in 1918 and served in France during World War I. When he returned to the United States

after the war, he divorced his wife. Taking various jobs, including working on the railroad and as a seaman, he traveled throughout North America, Australia, and parts of Asia. He saw much of Canada as a hobo. Upon settling in Chicago in the late 1920s, he remarried and worked variously as a carpenter, mechanic, foundry worker, and janitor. He retired in the 1950s and received a veteran’s pension.

A dream inspired Yoakum to begin making art in 1962. He described his creative process as “spiritual unfoldment.” In the last decade of his life, he drew thousands of anthropomorphic landscapes, working with pencil, ballpoint pen, pastels, and felt-tipped markers on paper. He also drew portraits of a few famous figures and modeled clay sculptures from kits, which he would feature in the window of his storefront studio on Chicago’s South Side.

In 1967 John Hopgood, an anthropologist and instructor, saw his work there and immediately bought twenty-two drawings. Edward Sherbeyn was Yoakum’s first dealer, but they had disagreements over consignment. The same year, Yoakum met Whitney Halsted, an art historian and professor who brought colleagues and students to visit Yoakum’s studio.

In the four years before Yoakum died in the Veterans Administration Hospital, his work was shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the San Francisco Art Institute, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. To date, more than one hundred exhibitions have featured his work.

### **Anna Zemánková Moravian, 1908–1986**

Anna Zemánková’s colorful drawings and collages feature biomorphic, decorative plant life. Her early pastel and oil pastel drawings are on large sheets of paper. She subsequently worked her surfaces by crimping and perforating paper and embroidering threads, beads, and spangles onto silk and satin. According to Annie Carlano, a curator at the Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe, Zemánková’s late works—black drawings on paper—were destroyed by one of her children.

Zemánková’s work is influenced by the folk traditions of her native Moravia (now part of the Czech Republic). The second of four children, she was born in the village of Staré Hodolany, near Olomouc. She enjoyed painting realistic landscapes and, during her teen years, had aspirations to attend the Academy of Fine Arts. Her father discouraged her artistic aspirations, so she studied to be a dental hygienist. In 1933 she married a civil servant and moved to Prague. She took up drawing as a means to assuage depression in the 1950s. According to her

granddaughter, Terezie Zemánková, the formation of an independent Czechoslovakia in 1918 stirred a patriotic celebration of folk costumes, songs, and fairy tales that inspired her work.

### **Domenico Zindato**

**Italian, b. 1966**

Born in the southern Italian province of Reggio Calabria, Domenico Zindato has traveled widely. He studied law and then theater design and cinema in Rome. He lived in Milan before moving in 1988 to Berlin, where he worked as a party organizer in nightclubs. He traveled to India and Mexico, living in Bombay and then in Mexico City, finally settling in Cuernavaca, Mexico, where he has lived since 1996.

The warm, vibrant colors in his works recall the natural features of Mexico. His color combinations may be attributed to the decorative arts Zindato saw while traveling in India. Made with pastel and ink applied with fine-haired brushes and nib pens on homemade paper, these richly detailed works range in size from less than eight inches to over three feet across. While the dimensions of Zindato's works have grown, the scale of his figures and abstract patterns remains the same. He spends three months working six to eight hours a day on each of these larger works. His imagery often includes iconic human figures and body parts, birds, snakes, letters, organic shapes, and fine-lined and decorative patterns.

In 1997 Zindato sat with Attila Richard Lukacs, a Canadian painter he had met in Berlin, on the doorstep of Phyllis Kind's gallery in New York until she agreed to look at Zindato's portfolio. Kind presented concurrent solo exhibitions of works by the two artists in the spring of 2000. His work was shown at Phyllis Kind Gallery again in 2004 and 2007 and at the American Folk Art Museum in 2010.

### **Carlo Zinelli**

**Italian, 1916–1974**

Born in the rural Italian countryside near Verona, Carlo Zinelli worked as a farm laborer and a butcher's apprentice until he was conscripted into the Italian army in 1936. It was during his military service that he first began showing symptoms of mental illness and was eventually discharged in 1941 after attacking his captain. After the war, Zinelli's mental condition worsened, and in 1947 his family committed him to the San Giacomo psychiatric hospital in Verona. He drew graffiti on the walls of the hospital, and in 1957 a studio for artistic expression was established in the hospital. Zinelli painted in the studio every day for fourteen years. His works, often double-sided, are filled with boldly painted human and animal figures that bear no apparent spatial relation to one another. Letters and words fill the composition as well, but they do not have any meaning. After the hospital closed in 1971, Zinelli was transferred to another facility, but his creative activity all but stopped.