

## The Winslow Homer Series

The Parkville Frame Gallery is honored to offer: **The Winslow Homer Series**, a selection of Homers' paintings in both watercolor and oil. These images, and others by Homer, can be purchased either already framed, or we can obtain an image, in a variety of sizes, and frame it to your specifications.



Source: American Paintings of the Nineteenth Century, Part One (The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.)

**The Artist: Winslow Homer** (1836-1910) was born in Boston, Massachusetts, the second of the three children, all sons, of Henrietta Benson and Charles Savage Homer. His artistic education consisted chiefly of his apprenticeship to Boston lithographer John H. Bufford and a few lessons in painting from Frédéric Rondel after that. Following his apprenticeship, Homer worked as a freelance illustrator for such magazines as *Harper's Weekly*. In 1859 he moved to New York City, where he began his career as a painter. He visited the front at least twice during the Civil War, and his first important paintings were of Civil War subjects, e.g., *Prisoners from the Front*, and *A Sharpshooter on Picket Duty*.

In 1867 Homer spent a year in France (the first of two visits to Europe). It had no discernibly significant effect on his art. In 1873 at Gloucester, Massachusetts, he began to paint in watercolor. In 1875 he submitted his last drawing to *Harper's Weekly*, ending his career as an illustrator. He traveled widely in the 1870's in New York State, to Virginia, and Massachusetts, and in 1881 he began a two-year stay in England, living in Cullercoats, near Newcastle.

Returning to America in 1883, he settled at Prout's Neck, Maine, where he would live for the rest of his life. From there he continued to travel widely, to the Adirondacks, Canada, and Florida to fish, and to Bermuda and the Caribbean to escape the harsh winters in Maine. In all those places he was painting the watercolors upon which much of his later fame would be based. In 1890 he painted the first of the series of seascapes at Prout's Neck that were the most admired of his late paintings in oil. Homer died in his Prout's Neck studio in 1910.



***Breezing Up*** (A Fair Wind) (1873 - 1876)

Winslow Homer

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

**Date painted:** 1873-1876

**How painted:** Oil on canvas (from an earlier watercolor “sketch”)

**Size:** 24-3/16 x 38-3/16 inches

**Where on display:** Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Source: The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

**The Artist:** **Winslow Homer** developed a penchant for forceful realism early in his career. During the early 1860s, his themes ranged from stylish seaside–resort life to the horrors of the battlefield. Following an extended trip to Europe in 1866–1867, Homer adopted a warmer palette, a looser brush technique, and an interest in painting outdoor scenes that owed much to the influence of contemporary French artists such as Courbet, Manet, and Monet. Upon his return to the United States, Homer turned his attention to lively scenes of sports and recreation, painting warm and appealing images that perfectly suited the prevalent postwar nostalgia for a simpler, more innocent America.

**The Art:** ***Breezing Up*** (A Fair Wind), painted during the country's centennial year, has become one of the best–known and most beloved artistic images of life in 19th–century America.



**Boy Fishing** (1892)  
Winslow Homer  
San Antonio Museum of Art

**Genre:** History painting

**Date painted:** 1892

**How originally painted:** Watercolor on paper

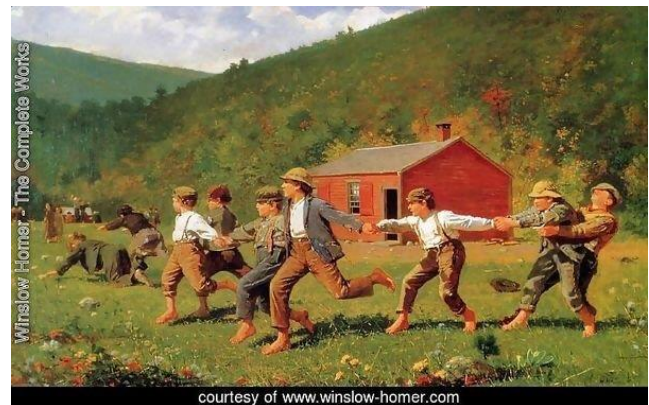
**Size:** 14.6 x 21 inches

**Where on display:** San Antonio Museum of Art

**The Art:** Winslow Homer finished the watercolor painting **Boy Fishing** in 1892. Homer often found inspiration during his many trips to the North Woods Club, which he took over several summers. The Club was located in the Adirondack Mountains, New York, near the hamlet of Minerva, and was an excellent location for sport fishing trips. Homer, of course, created many other watercolor and oil paintings showing children enjoying the outdoors. *Fishing* (1878), and *Snap the Whip 1* (1872) are but two more examples of his excellent paintings.



**Fishing** (1878)



**Snap the Whip 1** (1872)





***Hound and Hunter***, (1892)

Winslow Homer

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

**Date painted:** 1892

**How painted:** oil on canvas

**Size:** 28-1/4 x 48-1/8 inches

**Where on display:** The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Source: The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

**The Art:** *Hound and Hunter* from 1892 is related to a watercolor that Homer described in an inscription on its surface as: "the original sketch for the painting." The oil painting differs only slightly, principally in its more oblong format and the comparatively greater detail of its background.

By a method called "hounding", deer were hunted in the Adirondacks by driving them with dogs into lakes where they could easily be clubbed, shot, or drowned by hunters in boats. It is not an ingratiating subject, particularly on the scale of a large oil painting, which is probably why it remained so long unsold. When it was first exhibited, critics believed that the deer was still alive, which made it even less appealing. In December 1892 Homer answered such criticism in a testy letter to his dealer, Thomas B. Clarke: "The critics may think that that deer is alive but he is not—otherwise the boat and man would be knocked high & dry. I can shut the deer's eyes, and put pennies on them if that will make it better understood." Homer himself thought highly of *Hound and Hunter*. In October 1891 he wrote that it and another picture he was painting were "great works."



***The Life Line***, (1884)  
Winslow Homer  
Philadelphia Museum of Art

**Date painted:** 1884

**How painted:** Oil on canvas

**Size:** 28-5/8 x 44-3/4 inches

**Where on display:** Philadelphia Museum of Art

**The Art:** Homer often depicted the conflict between man and the sea. Here we see windswept waves, high drama, and heroism. In the summer of 1883 Homer saw a demonstration in Atlantic City of the use of a breeches buoy for rescue from the sea. The following year he painted this large, impressive, and immediately popular painting ***The Life Line*** (1884), one of several he did at this time on the rescue theme, depicting the dramatic transfer of an unconscious woman from a wrecked ship to shore.

*The Life Line* draws on the traditional shipwreck scenario - mountainous waves, wind and spray, a helpless vessel, and a desperate human struggle - with an original, modern perspective. A small group of prints and paintings made by Homer after 1884 continues his themes of anxiety, struggle, and stoicism in the face of tragedy. Such human narratives receded as more abstract themes of elemental conflict--land, sea, and sky--dominated the last two decades of the artist's career.

**Editor's note:** *The Life Line* is considered to be Homer's master piece.



***The Fog Warning*** (1885)  
Winslow Homer  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

**Date painted:** 1885

**How originally painted:** Oil on canvas

**Size:** 30 x 48 inches

**Where on display:** Museum of Fine Arts. Boston

Source: Museum of Fine Arts. Boston

**The Art:** *The Fog Warning* is a painting with a narrative, though its tale is disturbing rather than charming. As indicated by the halibut in his dory, the fisherman in this picture has been successful. But the hardest task of the day, the return to the main ship, is still ahead of him. He turns to look at the horizon, measuring the distance to the mother ship, and to safety. The seas are choppy and the dory rocks high on the waves, making it clear that the journey home will require considerable physical effort. But more threatening is the approaching fog bank, whose streamers echo, even mock, the fisherman's profile.

*The Fog Warning* is one of several paintings on marine subjects by Homer. Together with *The Herring Net* and *Breezing Up*, painted the same year, which also depict the hard lives of fishermen in Maine, it is considered among his best works on such topics.

**Editor's note:** A powerful painting when properly framed.





***The Herring Net*** (1885)  
Winslow Homer  
The Art Institute of Chicago

**Date painted:** 1885

**How originally painted:** Oil on canvas

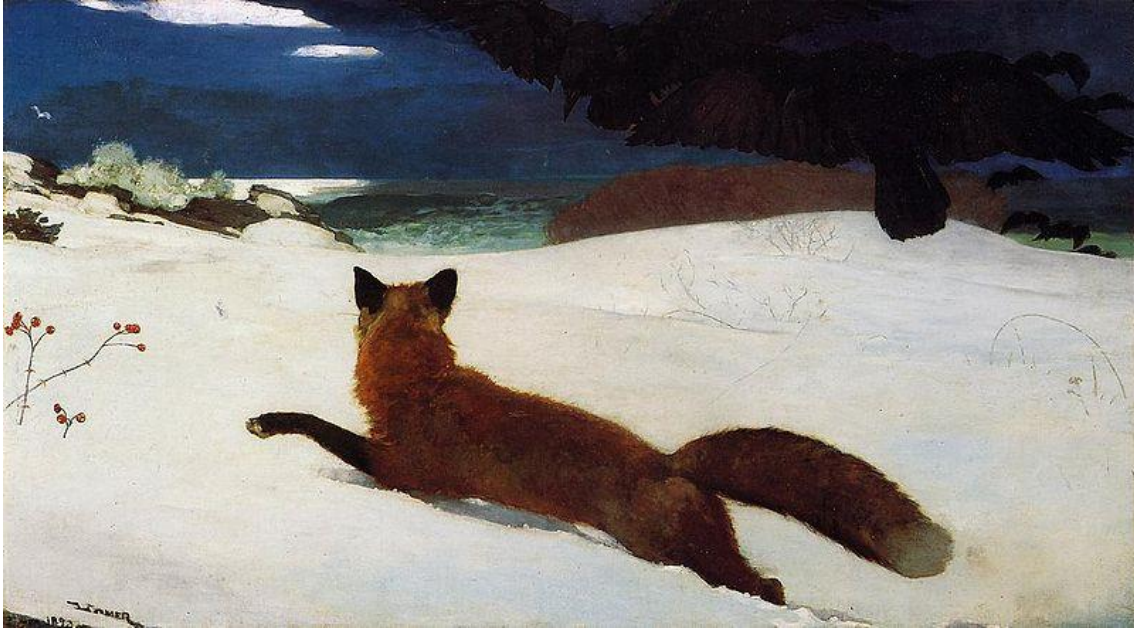
**Size:** 30-1/8 x 48-3/8 inches

**Where on display:** The Art Institute of Chicago

**Inscriptions:** Signed, lower right: "Homer 85"

Source: The Art Institute of Chicago

**The Art:** In 1883 Winslow Homer moved to the small coastal village of Prouts Neck, Maine, where he created a series of paintings of the sea unparalleled in American art. Long inspired by the subject, Homer had spent summers visiting New England fishing villages during the 1870s, and in 1881–82 he made a trip to a fishing community in Cullercoats, England, that fundamentally changed his work and his life. The paintings he created after 1882 focus almost exclusively on humankind's age-old contest with nature. In paintings such as ***The Herring Net*** (1885) Homer depicted the heroic efforts of fishermen at their daily work, hauling in an abundant catch of herring, for example. In a small dory, two figures loom large against the mist on the horizon, through which the sails of the mother schooners are dimly visible. While one fisherman hauls in the netted and glistening herring, the other unloads the catch. Utilizing the teamwork so necessary for survival, both strive to steady the precarious boat as it rides the incoming swells. Homer's isolation of these two figures underscores the monumentality of their task: the elemental struggle against a sea that both nurtures and deprives.



***The Fox Hunt*** (1893)

Winslow Homer

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

**Date painted:** 1893

**How originally painted:** Oil on canvas

**Size:** 38 x 68-1/2 inches

**Where on display:** Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

Source: Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

**The Artist:** After 1890, **Winslow Homer** frequently depicted "naturalist" subjects - hunting and fishing in the Adirondacks and coastal or marine views at Prout's Neck, Maine. Critics have interpreted these works as potent expressions of Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection, an idea of great currency in the late nineteenth century. *Fox Hunt* was Homer's largest painting to date, and of a size appropriate for the depiction of survival and its casualties.

Source: Philadelphia Museum of Art

**The Art:** In *The Fox Hunt*, we as viewers, we are placed behind the fox, seeing what it sees, as well as something more -- crows flying overhead. Because we share the fox's point of view, we are drawn into its dilemma: what should it do next? Should it hunt desperately for its next meal (a rabbit hiding in the snowy field, perhaps)? Escape possible danger close at hand (the fierce crows flying above)? Or try to do both simultaneously? These are life-and-death choices that both animals and humans may confront throughout their lives. The fact that we can't see the fox's face only adds to the excitement and mystery.





***The End of the Day, Adirondacks*** (1890)

Winslow Homer

The Art Institute of Chicago

**Date painted:** 1890

**How originally painted:** Watercolor

**Size:** 13.9 by 20 inches

**Where on display:** The Art Institute of Chicago

Source: The Art Institute of Chicago

**The Art:** *The End of the Day, Adirondacks* captures a fisherman's introspective moment. Homer rendered the light from the setting sun with pale pink and orange washes, seen in the sky and reflected in the water. Foliage in the background and at the right side of the image is depicted abstractly, adding to the scene's hazy atmosphere. This area shows signs of overwork, where Homer repeatedly removed and added color as he sought to soften the contours of the landscape, as if enveloped in the mist of evening. Characteristic of the artist's working methods, he did not try to obscure the passage and chose to let it stand.

**Medium:** Transparent watercolor, with traces of opaque watercolor, rewetting, blotting, and scraping, over traces of graphite, on moderately thick, rough-textured, ivory wove paper.

**Inscriptions:** Signed recto, lower left corner, in blue watercolor: "Homer '90" Inscribed verso, center, in graphite: "M.K.W.C. 1014-//The End of the Day, Adirondacks"