

The Regionalist Series

The Parkville Frame Gallery is pleased to offer **The Regionalist Series**. This series features a collection of reproductions of paintings created by regional artists. These images can be purchased either pre-framed in our gallery, or we can order these, and many other images, in a variety of sizes, and frame them to your specifications.



Trail Riders (1964--1965)

Thomas Hart Benton

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

Date painted: 1964--1965

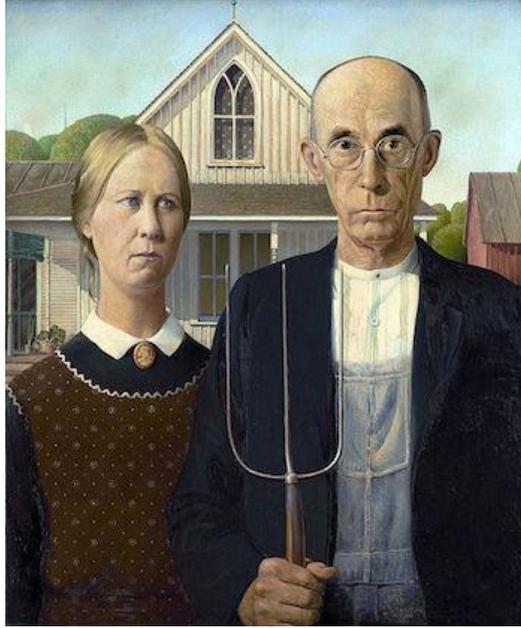
How originally painted: Oil on canvas

Size: Large (67-1/2 x 85-3/8 inches)

Where on display: The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (Accession Number 1975.42.1)

The Artist: **Thomas Hart Benton** was a major American artist from Missouri. His paintings are famous for showing ordinary people doing common things. He drew and painted portraits, landscapes, and scenes of people at work in farms, factories, and busy cities. His best-known works are public murals, or scenes on the inside walls of buildings. Benton's murals are lively records of life in America from pioneer times onward.

The Art: Late in his career Thomas Hart Benton concentrated on landscapes, many of which were inspired by sketching trips to rural areas. Although most of these represented farming activities, he was also attracted to spectacular mountain vistas like the one depicted in ***Trail Riders***. The painting was inspired by a 1964 trip that Benton took with his good friend the Kansas City attorney Lyman Field to the Canadian Rockies. The artist recollected that they had ridden from Banff to Mount Assiniboine in nine-and-a-half hours over the course of two days, his first horseback trip in more than 30 years.



American Gothic (1930)
Grant Wood
The Art Institute of Chicago

Date painted: 1930

How originally painted: Oil on Beaver Board

Size: 30 3/4 x 25 3/4 inches

Where on display: The Art Institute of Chicago

The Artist: Grant Wood (1891—1942) was one of the most famous Regionalist artists. He was an Iowa-born artist who studied art abroad in Europe. Although he saw modern art like abstraction, he rejected it, returning to Iowa where he was inspired by the farm life around him. Wood painted possibly the most well-known Regionalist painting, titled *American Gothic*, painted in 1930.

The Art: *American Gothic*: This familiar image was exhibited publicly for the first time at the Art Institute of Chicago, winning a three-hundred-dollar prize and instant fame for Grant Wood. The impetus for the painting came while Wood was visiting the small town of Eldon in his native Iowa. There he spotted a little wood farmhouse, with a single oversized window, made in a style called Carpenter Gothic. "I imagined American Gothic people with their faces stretched out long to go with this American Gothic house," he said. He used his sister and his dentist as models for a farmer and his daughter, dressing them as if they were "tintypes from my old family album." The highly detailed, polished style and the rigid frontality of the two figures were inspired by Flemish Renaissance art, which Wood studied during his travels to Europe between 1920 and 1928. After returning to settle in Iowa, he became increasingly appreciative of Midwestern traditions and culture, which he celebrated in works such as this. *American Gothic*, often understood as a satirical comment on the Midwestern character, quickly became one of America's most famous paintings.



Fur Traders Descending the Missouri (1845)

George Caleb Bingham

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

Date painted: 1845

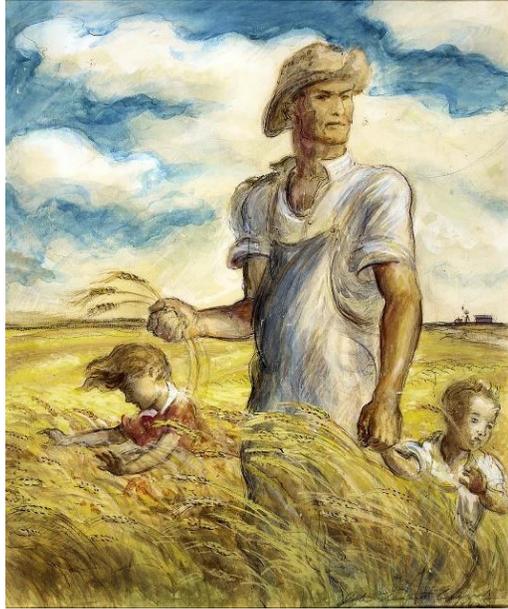
How originally painted: Oil on canvas

Size: 29 x 36 1/2 inches

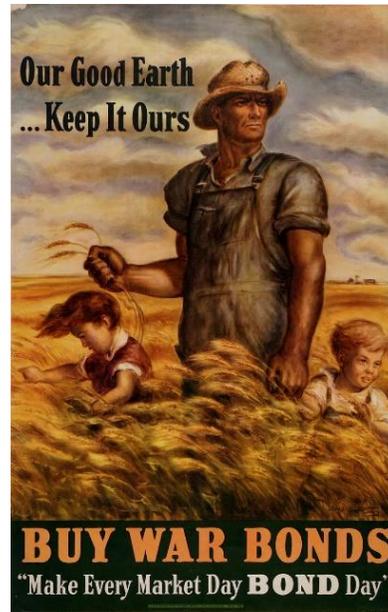
Where on display: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, NY

The Artist: **George Caleb Bingham** (1811--1879) was an American artist, soldier and politician known in his lifetime as "the Missouri Artist". Initially a Whig, he was elected as a delegate to the Missouri legislature before the American Civil War where he fought the extension of slavery westward. During that war, although born in Virginia, Bingham was dedicated to the Union cause and became captain of a volunteer company which helped keep the state from joining the Confederacy, and then served four years as Missouri's Treasurer. During his final years, Bingham held several offices in Kansas City, while also serving as Missouri's Adjutant General.

The Art: ***Fur Traders Descending the Missouri:*** In the summer of 1845, Bingham returned to his St. Louis home from a winter stay in central Missouri, bringing with him several paintings and sketches. This was one of those works that he later sent to New York's American Art-Union, a subscription-based organization that promoted American art nationally through exhibitions and the distribution of popular prints. Titled by the artist "French Trader & Half breed Son", the Art-Union changed it to the more generic and less controversial "Fur Traders Descending the Missouri". Bingham, who began his career as a portraitist, produced this distinctive genre painting with little precedent in his oeuvre. The tranquil scene, with its luminous atmosphere, idealized the American frontier for the benefit of an Eastern audience.



Our Good Earth (1942)
John Steuart Curry
Smithsonian American Art Museum



World War II War-bond poster

Date painted: 1942

How originally painted: Watercolor on illustration board

Size: 13 ³/₈ x 11 inches

Where on display: Smithsonian American Art Museum

The Artist: **John Steuart Curry** (1897--1946) was an American painter whose career spanned the years from 1924 until his death in 1946. He was noted for his paintings depicting rural life in his home state, Kansas. Along with Thomas Hart Benton and Grant Wood, he was hailed as one of the three great painters of American Regionalism of the first half of the twentieth century. Curry's artistic production was varied, including paintings, book illustrations, prints, and posters. Curry was Kansas's best known painter, but his works were not popular with Kansans, who felt that he did not portray the state positively enough. Curry's paintings often depicted farm life and animals, tornadoes, prairie fires, and the violent Bleeding Kansas period (featuring abolitionist John Brown, who at the time was derided as a fanatical traitor) – subjects that Kansans did not want to be representative of the state.

The Art: ***Our Good Earth:*** When Curry was asked to create a monumental image for a war-bond poster during World War II, he depicted a noble American farmer, flanked by two carefree children, standing tall in his Kansas wheat field. The imposing figure emphasizes how important farming was to the war effort. This watercolor is a study for the painting, which was then reproduced as a poster captioned: "Our Good Earth – Keep It Ours."