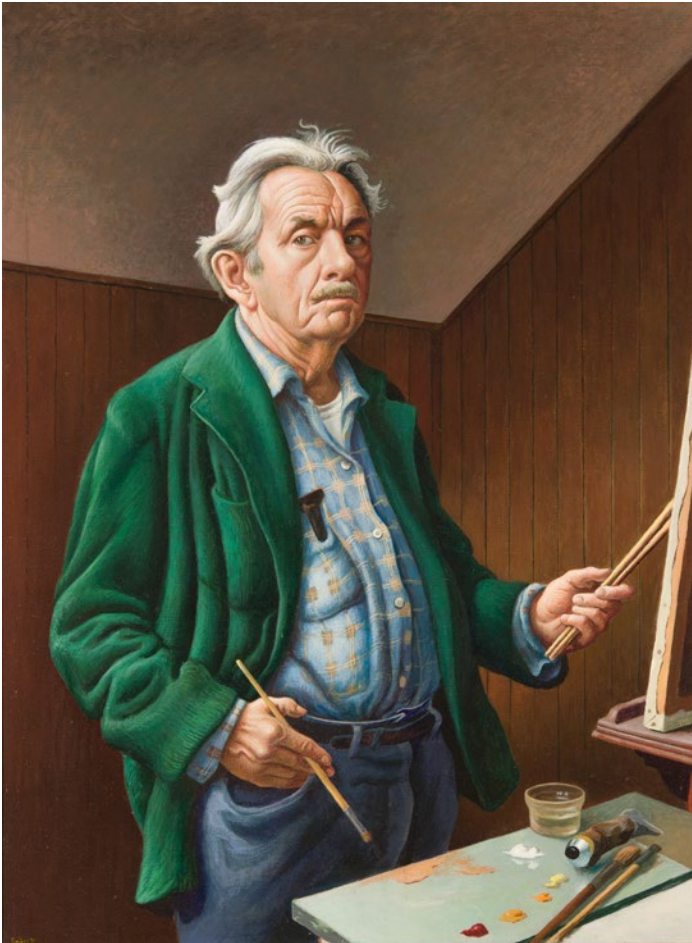


A black and white photograph of a man with a mustache, likely the artist Thomas Hart Benton, sitting in a chair. He is wearing a light-colored jacket over a white shirt and a striped tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is a busy, stylized scene of people in motion, possibly a crowd or a public event, rendered in a dynamic, almost cubist style. To the left of the man, there is a small table with a lamp and a teacup. The overall composition is centered on the man, with the background providing a sense of movement and activity.

Schoelkopf

Thomas Hart Benton
BIOGRAPHY

Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975)



Thomas Hart Benton, *Self-Portrait*, 1970. Polymer tempera on canvas, 39½ × 29¾ inches (100.3 × 74.5 cm). © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo credit: Steve Gyurina, Artopia Giclée

Cover: Thomas Hart Benton seated before two panels from his mural *The History of New York* (1927): *Civil War* and *New York Today*. © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo credit: Getty Images / Bettman

Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975) was a leading figure in twentieth-century American art. Acclaimed for his colorful and dynamic depictions of everyday life, labor, and the land, Benton focused on creating a popular, accessible, and distinctively American kind of modern art. During the interwar era, he was extremely successful: widely exhibited in major museums and galleries, reviewed and reproduced in the art press and mainstream media, and collected by both notable patrons and members of the general public. Today, Benton’s artistic renown is allied with other distinguished American moderns who were his peers including Stuart Davis, Marsden Hartley, Edward Hopper, Georgia O’Keeffe, Charles Sheeler, Grant Wood, and Andrew Wyeth. Like each of them, Benton developed a highly recognizable “signature” style that remains the focus of numerous exhibitions, retrospectives, catalogues, and art market attention.

Benton’s bold and animated style of art was a distinct brand of American modernism, a mix of new methods of form construction, color harmony, and points of view combined with new subjects and fresh themes including urban life and modern industry, folklore and popular culture, and highly personalized interpretations of the American landscape. Overall, Benton aimed to convey the energy and intensity of modern times. Comparing his paintings with those by earlier American artists, such as his fellow Missourian George Caleb Bingham, reveals Benton’s obvious modern sensibility, his rejection of the “natural” colors, static compositions, and scientific or objective perspectives of a previous era. Like a new generation of twentieth-century American artists ranging from Charles Demuth to Ben Shahn, Benton represented his subjects in distinctly modern ways.

His compelling style and generally upbeat assessment of modern America was appealing and inspirational. Benton was a longtime art teacher in New York and Kansas City whose students included Jackson Pollock, the well-known Abstract Expressionist painter. From the 1930s to the 1950s, Benton

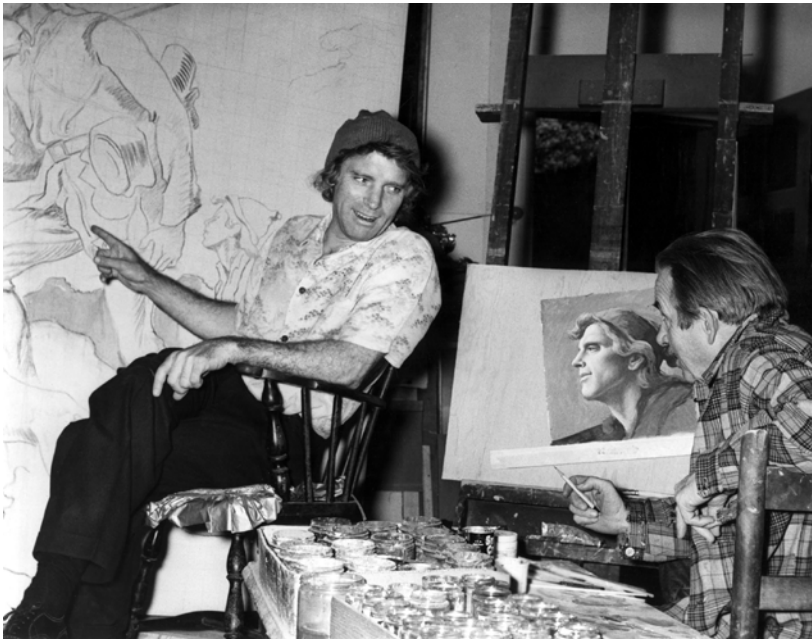


FIG. 1 Thomas Hart Benton paints actor Burt Lancaster in 1954 for his commission to produce a painting for the poster promoting the Hollywood movie *The Kentuckian*. © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo credit: Everett Collection / Bridgeman Images



FIG. 2 Thomas Hart Benton, *Study for The Kentuckian*, 1954. Oil on board, 15 × 10½ inches (38.1 × 26.7 cm). © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

was also well-known, an artist-celebrity regularly featured in mass media and commissioned by commercial interests (see, e.g., figs. 1 and 2). His popular style of art, which included easel paintings, large-scale murals, sketches, and lithographs, was grounded in his family background and his own tireless interests in experiencing and depicting modern life.

Benton's brand of modernism was a blend of art, popular culture, and liberal politics. Born in Neosho, Missouri, Benton was the eldest son of Maecenus Eason Benton, a populist U.S. congressman who served four terms in Washington, D.C. from 1897 to 1905. Benton was named after his great-great-uncle, Senator Thomas Hart Benton, a champion of western expansion and author of the first Homestead Act, by which U.S. citizens could obtain free tracts of surveyed government land. Benton was, in other words, the twentieth-century heir presumptive of American republicanism: an ideology of individualism and independence, community and citizenship, democracy and progress, that centered on curbing material self-interests and corruption to sustain the civic virtues and democratic values on which the United States was originally imagined.

"Politics was the core of our family life," Benton observed in the opening pages of his 1937 autobiography, *An Artist in America* (fig. 3), and liberal, reformist politics were his family's particular currency. In the mid-nineteenth century, Senator Thomas Hart Benton challenged the

federal government's monopolization of public land and played a major role in national banking reform. During the Gilded Age, Benton's congressman father tackled the rapacious greed of monopoly capitalism, representing "the peoples interests" in political battles, his son later wrote, against "big bankers, big railroad magnates, big corporations."¹ Benton was expected to tow the family's political line. He did, but on his own terms. He championed the American people and democratic political reform, and challenged established conventions and norms, with his brand of modern American art.

A gifted draftsman and precocious teenager, Benton dropped out of high school when he was a junior. Moving to

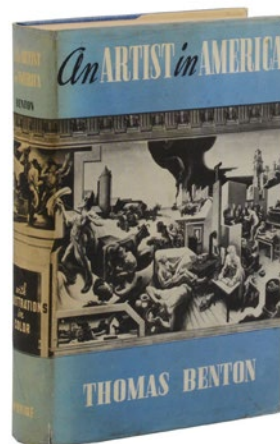


FIG. 3 Thomas Hart Benton's autobiography, *An Artist in America* (1937)

Joplin, Missouri, he became a staff cartoonist for the local newspaper, *The Joplin American*. In 1907, he enrolled at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago, where he studied watercolor and oil painting and copied the fluid lines and exotic subject matter of artists ranging from Hokusai to James Abbott McNeill Whistler. In 1908, he went to Paris, where he lived for three years. Taking anatomy and composition classes at the Académie Julian, he sketched plaster casts of classical sculpture, studied French literature and philosophy, and met “many personalities later to become famous in the art world” including John Marin, Diego Rivera, George Grosz, Jo Davidson, Jacob Epstein, Morgan Russell, and Stanton MacDonal-Wright (see, e.g., fig. 4). In 1912, Benton settled in New York, where he “struggled to make a living and find a ‘way to painting’” while he made his mark in modern American art.² He lived in New York until 1935.

In the 1910s, he found work in the budding motion picture industry, a powerful new form of mass communication and popular culture then centered in East Coast studios. Living at the Lincoln Square Arcade, a warren of studios at 65th and Broadway rented by modern artists such as George Bellows, Stuart Davis, and Marcel Duchamp, Benton shared a room with Rex Ingram, an aspiring film director who had studied sculpture at Yale. Ingram, who would go on to direct Rudolph Valentino in movies like *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (1921), “procured” industry jobs for Benton such as set designing, scene painting, elevation views for movie backgrounds, and historical research.³ “I had five years’ experience with it, off and on,” Benton related in 1973, adding:

It was all very informal in those days and the pictures were just sort of made up as they went along. I recall how the workmen, the designer, the head scene-painter, and myself would have dinner at Lüchow’s to plan what we were going to do next day. Then I would go to the New York Public Library and look up what I could on the background of what-ever the story called for. Then I would make sketches and go back to the film studio, where I would paint—everything was in black and white, of course—the backdrops, which were quite illusionary.⁴

Benton’s experiences in the silent film industry were formative. Early cinema’s balance of storytelling and “illusionary” visual representation, and the techniques that moviemakers used to achieve this balance, became Benton’s own objectives in modern art. The size, scale, and visual composition of the movie backdrops he worked on

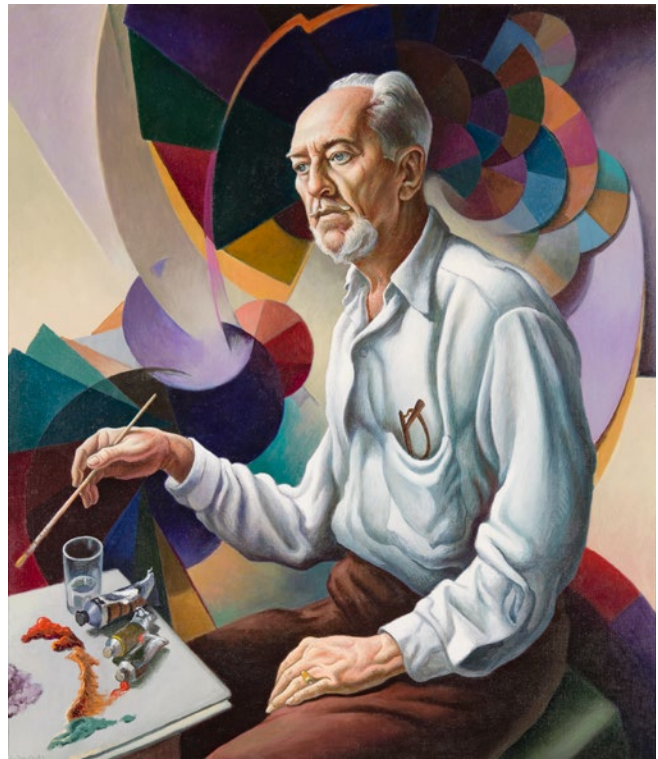


FIG. 4 Thomas Hart Benton, *Portrait of Stanton Macdonald-Wright*, 1961–62. Oil on canvas, 40 × 34 inches (101.6 × 86.4 cm). © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo credit: Steve Gyurina, Artopia Giclée

were reproduced in the format and style of the murals he began painting in the 1920s. Their bold palette reflected his experiments with distemper, a glue-based painting technique that set designers used to generate dramatic color tones that held up under glowing backlights. And the process of historical research, of exploring “the background” of the subjects and themes he painted, became a lifelong habit for Benton. The oversize panels, strong light-dark contrasts, dynamic compositions, and carefully researched subjects of his first mural project, *The American Historical Epic* (1919–28; see, e.g., figs. 5 and 6), strongly suggest the influence of these and other moviemaking methods. Seen all together, the panels of this mural mimic the frenzied, flickering look of an early motion picture. Originally planned as a 50-panel series of interconnected scenes depicting the evolution of the United States, from the “discovery” of the New World to modern times, Benton’s mural (never completed) would have been the paint-on-canvas equivalent of a feature-length silent film.

In addition to movie work, Benton “did all kinds of jobs” during the 1910s, from sketching “heads of pretty girls” and celebrities for popular magazines to designing

illustrations for sheet music, working as a “layout man for a lettering company,” decorating ceramics, running art galleries, and teaching drawing classes.⁵ In 1915, he joined the People’s Art Guild, a New York artist’s cooperative founded by social activist John Weichsel that aimed to “circumvent the commercial gallery system” by promoting modern American art to the general public.⁶ Through Weichsel’s connections, Benton became director of the Chelsea Neighborhood Association Art Gallery in 1916, where he organized monthly exhibits on art ranging from “scenes of New York City designed for use on post cards” to “modern American poster designs.” In June 1917, Benton’s early paintings were shown at the gallery, in an exhibition that art critic (and brother of Synchronist Stanton Macdonald-Wright) Willard Huntington Wright deemed “the most important modern exhibition of the month.”⁷

The work Benton made in the 1910s reflected his attention to the multiple styles or “isms” of modern art evolving in the U.S. and Europe, including Impressionism, Pointillism, Symbolism, Fauvism, Cubism, Synchronism, and Constructivism. Benton adapted these avant-garde styles in portraits, landscapes, and “a series of flat, decorative still lifes in muted colors” based on flowers illustrated in seed catalogues (he couldn’t afford to buy real flowers).⁸ Although he sold few works, he began to gain recognition as a noteworthy

American modern. His color-saturated Synchronist figure studies, for example, were included in the 1916 Forum Exhibition, a landmark show organized by Robert Henri, Alfred Stieglitz, and John Weichsel that aimed to show “the American public . . . the very best examples of the more modern American art.”⁹ Benton’s paintings were included with work by Arthur Dove, Marsden Hartley, Man Ray, Stanton MacDonald-Wright, and other American moderns.

Benton painted a number of abstract pictures in the 1910s: still lifes and compositional studies depicting arrangements of wood, wire, and paper, and colorful oil sketches of blocks, cubes, and other geometric forms (see, e.g., fig. 7). Many of these early abstract works were lost in a fire at the Benton family home in Neosho in 1917. Decades later, a suitcase full of Benton’s small abstract paintings was discovered, revealing his convincing assimilation of the diverse innovations of multiple strains of modern art. In his review of a 1981 exhibition of these newfound works, critic Hilton Kramer relayed his surprise about Benton’s “little abstract pictures” and even ventured to call him a “radical modernist.”¹⁰

Kramer’s surprise was grounded in Benton’s later reputation as a Regionalist, a popular painter of representational scenes and American Scene subjects. Yet Benton was always a modern artist. In the 1920s, he began adapting the exuberant rhythms, skewed perspectives, and bright



FIG. 5 Thomas Hart Benton, *Study for American Historical Epic — Colonial Expansion: Struggle for the Wilderness*, c. 1927–28. Oil on paper, 18⁷/₈ × 21¹/₄ inches (47.9 × 54 cm). © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



FIG. 6 Thomas Hart Benton, *American Historical Epic: Struggle for the Wilderness*, 1927–28. Oil on canvas, 66¹/₄ × 72¹/₄ inches (168.3 × 183.5 cm). The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. Bequest of the artist, F75-21/9. © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Image courtesy of Nelson-Atkins Digital Production & Preservation

colors of his abstract exercises in large-scale paintings and murals, refining his brand of American modernism and setting the pace for the dynamic style of art he would produce for the next fifty years. Importantly, Benton often credited the influence of his early abstract work, remarking, "My representational work has abstraction in it. It has never completely left my figurative painting." In 1969, he observed: "Contrary to general belief, the 'Regionalist' movement did not in any way oppose abstract form. It simply wished to put meanings, recognizable American meanings, into some of it."¹¹ Narrow assumptions that modern American art was only abstract or non-representational fail to recognize the concept of "multiple modernities," and the many different kinds of modern art that were practiced in the U.S. and around the globe in the twentieth-century.¹²

Benton spent the 1920s honing the stylistic and theoretical framework of his brand of American modernism. He began spending his summers in Chilmark on Martha's Vineyard in 1920, later writing that it was on this island off the southeastern coast of Massachusetts that he "really began" his "intimate study of the American environment and its people" (see, e.g., fig. 8).¹³ He and his wife Rita Piacenza (they married in 1922) spent over fifty summers at Chilmark,



FIG. 7 Thomas Hart Benton, *Rhythmic Construction*, 1919. Distemper on canvas mounted on panel, 28 × 22 inches (71.1 × 55.9 cm). © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo credit: Steve Gyurina, Artopia Giclée



FIG. 8 Thomas Hart Benton, *Chilmark Landscape*, 1925. Oil on canvas, 18¼ × 23 inches (46.4 × 58.4 cm). © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo credit: Tom Morrill



FIG. 9 Thomas Hart Benton sketches Rita Piacenza on the beach, Martha's Vineyard, c. 1920. Image courtesy of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art



FIG. 10 Alfred Eisenstadt, Coburn Gilman, Jackson Pollock, and Rita Benton at the Benton House on Martha's Vineyard, 1937

eventually owning property and becoming full-time seasonal residents (see, e.g., figs. 9 and 10).

In 1926, Benton started teaching at New York's Art Students League, offering classes in Life Drawing, Painting, and Mural Composition to students including Alexander Calder, Edward Laning, Archie Musick, Charles and Jackson Pollock (see, e.g., fig. 11), and Fairfield Porter. He modeled his teaching around "Mechanics of Form Organization in Painting," a series of articles he published in *The Arts* from 1926–1927 that outlined his ideas about dynamic picture-making in the modern age. In his classes, Benton promoted "an intensive study of the Renaissance masters—Titian, Tintoretto, Rubens" to help students learn "the fundamental underlying structures" of light, modeling, and scale that challenged the pictorial limitations of inertia and flatness.¹⁴ He used the term "hollows and bumps" to describe how oppositional forces such as light and dark generate rhythm and movement. His theory of modern art making was also a personal guide. "I taught what I was trying to learn," Benton later recalled. "I worked in the class . . . I drew there, too. We made compositional analyses." He later told art historian Francis V. O'Connor, "My students didn't study *under* me but *with* me."¹⁵

He traveled extensively in the 1920s. As he remarked in his autobiography, "We Americans are restless. We cannot



FIG. 11 Jackson Pollock, *Going West*, c. 1934–35. Oil on fiberboard, 15 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches (38.3 × 52.7 cm). Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C. Gift of Thomas Hart Benton, 1973.149.1. © 2024 Pollock-Krasner Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo credit: Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC / Art Resource, NY

FIG. 12 Thomas Hart Benton, *Oil Rig*, 1926. Watercolor, pen, and ink, 8¼ × 8¼ inches (21 × 21 cm). © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

FIG. 13 Thomas Hart Benton, *Cowboys and Horses*, c. 1926–30. Watercolor, ink, and pencil on paper, 9 × 12 inches (22.9 × 30.5 cm). © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

stay put.” Benton satisfied his own “itch for going places” by taking exploratory research trips across America, gathering the visual details and local anecdotes that fueled his art. In 1928, he and Bill Hayden, one of his Art Students’ League students, went on the road for several months. Driving from Pittsburgh to New Mexico, with stops in Tennessee, Louisiana, and Texas, they avoided the “main traveled roads, the highways” for “the back counties of our country.”¹⁶ Benton made hundreds of sketches during their trip, from scenes of steel mills, coal mines, lumber camps, and oil rigs to pictures of Holy Rollers, cotton pickers, and cowboys (see, e.g., figs. 12 and 13). He exhibited many of his travel sketches, and several oil paintings that he worked up such as *Boomtown* (1928; Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester), a scene of the oil fields in the Texas Panhandle, at Delphic Galleries in 1929.

Soon thereafter, he was commissioned to paint the ten-panel mural *America Today* (1930–31; e.g., fig. 14, which features Jackson Pollock as the figure at right) for the third-floor boardroom of the New School for Social Research in New York. Focusing on scenes of modern labor and popular culture, Benton abstracted his travel sketches and depicted an idealized America where men of all races work



“I was after a picture of America in its entirety . . . I ranged north and south and from New York to Hollywood and back and forth in legend and history.”

—Thomas Hart Benton



FIG. 14 Thomas Hart Benton, *America Today: Steel*, 1930–31. Egg tempera with oil glazing over Permalba on a gesso ground on linen mounted to wood panels with a honeycomb interior, 92 inches × 9 feet (233.7 × 297.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of AXA Equitable, 2012. © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY

together in factories and on farms, and people from all sorts of backgrounds collectively enjoy the movies, dance halls, and public parks. Optimistic, energetic, and mostly mythical, *America Today* was Benton's first fully realized public mural, a synthesis of movie-making methods and modern art styles that projected his liberal vision of labor and social reform. Painted just as the Great Depression unfolded, *America Today* was meant to inspire and encourage audiences to restore, or recreate, American republicanism.

Greeted with kudos when it was unveiled in January 1931, *America Today* catapulted Benton to fame and fortune, and firmly established his reputation as a major



FIG. 15 Cover of *Time* magazine, December 24, 1934, featuring Thomas Hart Benton's *Self-Portrait*, 1924–25

American modern. In 1934, he was the first artist to be featured on the cover of *Time* (fig. 15), which named him a “hero of American art.” In 1937, he was hired by *Life* as a roving reporter, sketching scenes of striking autoworkers in Detroit and movie mythmaking in Hollywood. In 1940, the Divorce Reform League listed him, along with President Roosevelt and Lou Gehrig, as one of “America’s five best husbands,” a ranking that was widely covered in the national press. In 1942, critic Manny Farber wryly noted, “When Mr. B. paints a picture, almost like magic the presses start rolling, cameras clicking, and before you know it everyone in East Orange is talking about Tom’s latest painting.”¹⁷ Benton’s murals for the Whitney Museum of American Art (*The Arts of Life in America*, 1932, now at the New Britain Museum of American Art; see, e.g., fig. 16), the State of Indiana (1933), and the Missouri State Capitol (1936) were among the most publicized of his career. He was also a key member of Associated American Artists, a New York art gallery established in 1934 to market limited edition, hand-signed prints by well-known artists to the general public, for just five dollars each. Sales boomed:



FIG. 16 Thomas Hart Benton, *The Arts of Life in America: Arts of the West*, 1932. Egg tempera and oil glaze on linen, 93¾ × 159½ inches (238.1 × 405.1 cm). New Britain Museum of American Art. Harriet Russell Stanley Fund. © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

FIG. 17 President Harry S. Truman and Thomas Hart Benton, on November 16, 1959, hold up the final cartoon for Benton's mural, *Independence and the Opening of the West*, commissioned for the Harry S. Truman Library.



70,000 prints were sold in the first two years. Benton strongly supported this democratic approach to art marketing, which aimed at making modern American art available to “everyone.”

Time magazine coined the phrase “regional art” in its 1934 cover story on Benton and other American Scene artists. Benton objected to the label, later writing: “I was after a picture of America in its entirety . . . I ranged north and south and from New York to Hollywood and back and forth in legend and history.” But in 1935 he returned to Missouri to head the painting department at the Kansas City Art Institute, and acquiesced to the moniker of “Midwestern Regionalist” along with Grant Wood (from Iowa) and John Steuart Curry (from Kansas). Promoting a style of modern American art focused on familiar scenes of workers, landscapes, and everyday life, Regionalism became a leading style of art during the Depression. In Ken Burns’ documentary *Thomas Hart Benton* (1988), Benton’s sister remarks that her brother “wanted people who read the funny papers to like his pictures.” Yet Benton’s intentions extended beyond mere popularity. As he explained in a 1951 essay, his brand of Regionalism was “very largely affirmative of the social explorations of American society and resultant democratic impulses on which President Roosevelt’s New Deal was based.” It was also explicitly public: as a Regionalist, Benton was deeply committed to creating a “people’s art,” a modern American art that embodied “the peoples’ behaviors, their action” as “the primary reality of American life.”¹⁸

In the late 1930s, Benton, Rita, and their children T.P. Benton and Jessie Benton moved into a large house at 3616 Bellevue in Kansas City, near the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Today, the home is a Missouri State Historic Site. At the nearby art institute, Benton taught students including Eric Bransby, Guy Maccoy, Roger Medearis, Archie Musick, Margot Peet, Fred Shane, Charles Banks Wilson, and the future film actor Dennis Hopper. In his home studio, converted from a carriage house, Benton painted portraits, landscapes, and still lifes for clients ranging from the American Tobacco Company to Twentieth Century Fox Studios.

Even after the Regionalist movement was surpassed in the 1950s by other strains of modern American art, such as the Abstract Expressionist style of his best-known student Jackson Pollock, Benton continued to receive commissions and remained a lasting influence on the trajectory of American modernism (see, e.g., fig. 17). Prolific and hard-working, Benton had just put the finishing touches on a mural for the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville when he died of a heart attack in his Kansas City studio, on January 19, 1975.



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NOTES

1. Thomas Hart Benton, *An Artist in America*, 4th ed. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1983), 5, and "Boyhood," an undated manuscript in the Thomas Hart Benton Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, as noted in Erika Doss, *Benton, Pollock, and the Politics of Modernism: From Regionalism to Abstract Expressionism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 25.
2. Benton, *An Artist in America*, 378-379.
3. Thomas Hart Benton, *An American in Art: A Professional and Technical Autobiography* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1969), 34. On Benton's work in the movie industry see Doss, *Benton, Pollock, and the Politics of Modernism*, 42-44, and Erika Doss, "Mining the Dream Factory: Thomas Hart Benton, American Artists, and the Rise of the Movie Industry," in *American Epics: Thomas Hart Benton and Hollywood*, ed. Austen Barron Bailey (Munich: Prestel, 2015), 64-82.
4. Robert S. Gallagher, "An Artist in America," *American Heritage* 24 (June 1973): 43. Lüchow's was a popular German restaurant on East 14th Street, near Union Square.
5. Benton, *An American in Art*, 31; Benton quoted in Paul Cummings, "Oral History Interview with Thomas Hart Benton, 1973, July 23-24," Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, p. 19.
6. Sarah Archino, "The People's Art Guild and the Forward Exhibition of 1917," *American Art* 27, no. 3 (Fall 2013): 15.
7. "Art Gallery in Chelsea, Neighborhood Association Will Give Exhibitions Each Month," *New York Times* (May 1, 1916); "Gallery Notice," *New York World* (June 11, 1916); Willard Huntington Wright, "Modern Art: An American Painter of Promise," *The International Studio* 61, no. 244 (June 1917): 95.
8. Benton, *An American in Art*, 31.
9. *The Forum Exhibition of Modern American Painters* (New York: Mitchell Kennerley, 1916), 5.
10. On the "suitcase Bentons" see *Thomas Hart Benton: Synchronist Paintings 1915-1920 From a Private Collection* (New York: Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, Inc., 1981), which includes a short introduction by Matthew Baigell; Hilton Kramer, "Art View: Benton, the Radical Modernist," *New York Times* (January 10, 1982): Sect. 2-25.
11. Micheline Keating, "He Got Away from Psychic Inversions," *Tucson Daily Citizen* (May 3, 1958); Benton, *An American in Art*, 77.
12. See, for example, S.E. Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities," *Daedalus* 129, no. 1 (Winter 2000): 1-29.
13. Benton, *An Artist in America*, 63.
14. Charles Pollock quoted in J. Richard Gruber, "Thomas Hart Benton: Teaching and Art Theory," PhD diss. (University of Kansas, 1987), 197.
15. Paul Cummings, oral history interview with Thomas Hart Benton, 1973, July 23-24, p. 37. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution; Francis V. O'Connor, "The Genesis of Jackson Pollock: 1912-1943," *Artforum* 5, no. 9 (May 1967): 17.
16. Benton, *An American in Art*, 65, 77.
17. "Art: U.S. Scene," *Time* (December 24, 1934): 24-27; "Artist Thomas Hart Benton Hunts Communists and Fascists in Michigan," *Life* (July 26, 1937): 22-25; "Carnegie Institute International Art Exhibition," *Life* (December 12, 1938): 74-75; "Roosevelt and Benton Rated 'Best Husbands'," *Kansas City Star* (February 16, 1940); Manny Farber, "Thomas Benton's War," *New Republic* 106 (April 20, 1942): 542-543.
18. Thomas Hart Benton, "American Regionalism, A Personal History of the Movement," (1951), reprinted in Benton, *An American in Art*, 147-192; quotes noted on pp. 148, 192, 149.