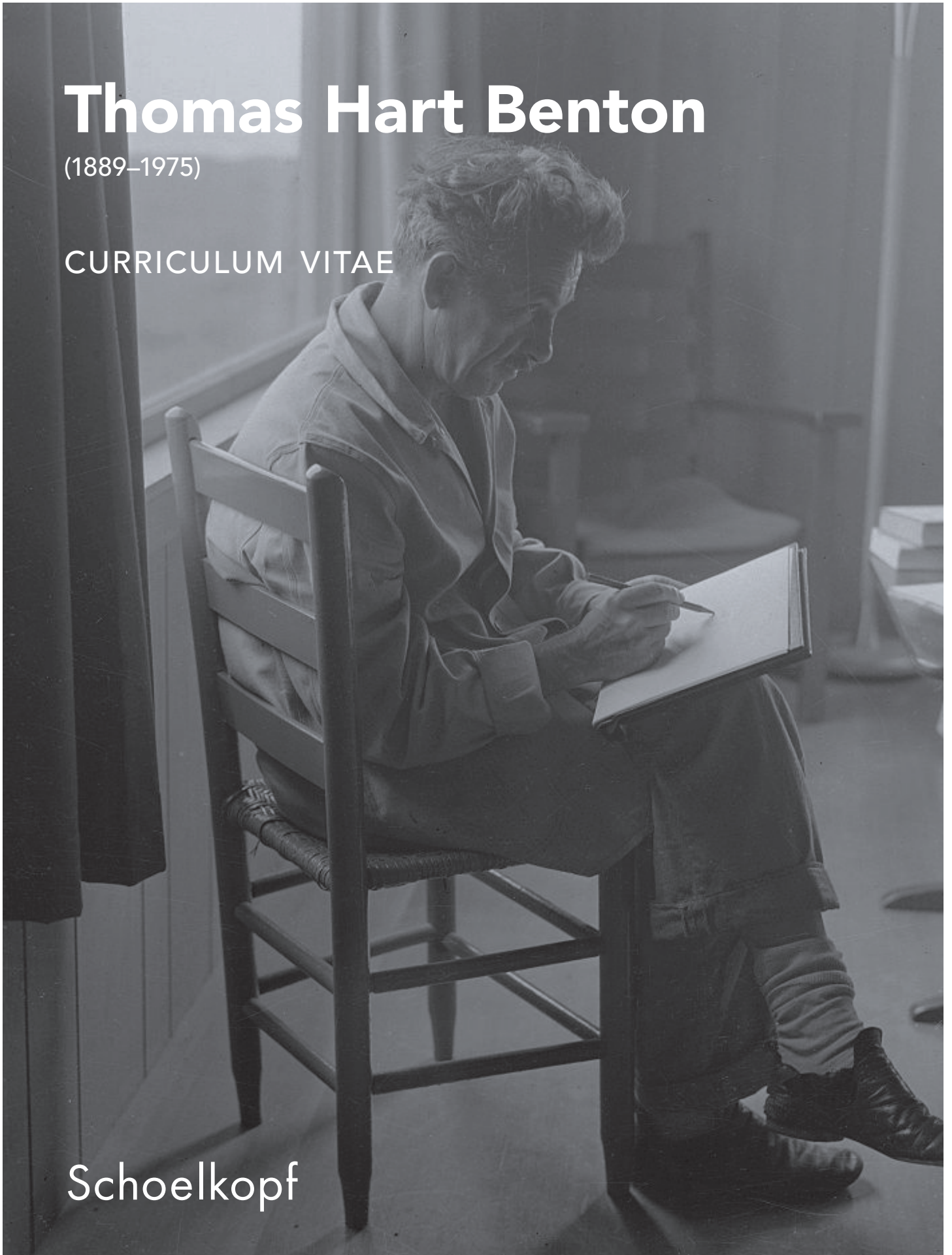


# Thomas Hart Benton

(1889–1975)

CURRICULUM VITAE

Schoelkopf



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## Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975)

1889 Born in Neosho, Missouri, on April 15, 1889

1975 Dies in Kansas City, Missouri, on January 19, 1975

### Education

1905–06 Neosho High School, Missouri

1906–07 Western Military Academy, Alton, Illinois

1907 School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois

c. 1908–09 Académie Julian, Paris, France

### Awards

1933 Gold medal from the Architectural League of New York for mural work

1943 Carol H. Beck Medal for *Aaron* (1941) at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts *138th Annual Exhibition*

1945 Named honorary member of Argentina's Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes

1949 Honorary Doctorate, Fine Arts, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri, including admission to Phi Beta Kappa

1949 Honorary membership to L'Accademia Fiorentina delle Arti del Disegno, Florence and to Accademia Senese degli Intronati, Siena, Italy

1957 Honorary Doctorate, Letters, Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri

1962 Elected to the National Academy of Arts and Letters

1966 Re-elected to the National Academy of Arts and Letters

1968 Honorary Doctorate, Fine Arts, New School for Social Research, New York

1969 Distinguished Service Award from The State Historical Society of Missouri

1985 Inducted into the Hall of Famous Missourians at the Missouri House of Representatives



Thomas Hart Benton, *Aaron*, 1941. Oil and egg tempera on canvas, mounted on plywood, 30¼ x 24¼ inches (76.8 x 61.6 cm). Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia. Joseph E. Temple Fund, 1943.3. This painting earned Benton the prestigious Carol H. Beck Gold Medal in 1943. © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



Luigi Pellettieri, Thomas Hart Benton, center, receiving an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree, New School for Social Research, New York, June 4, 1968. The New School Photograph Collection, NS.04.01.01, box 7, folder 5, The New School Archives and Special Collections, New York, New York

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Thomas Hart Benton, *The Arts of Life in America*, 1932. Egg tempera and oil glaze on linen. New Britain Museum of Art. Harriet Russell Stanley Fund. © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 1917 Chelsea Neighborhood Art Gallery, New York, *Paintings and Drawings by Thomas H. Benton*, March–April 15, 1917
- 1927 New Gallery, New York, *Thomas H. Benton*, February 12–28, 1927
- 1929 Delphic Studios, New York, *Tos. H. Benton: Drawings and Watercolor Paintings, "The South,"* October 14–November 15, 1929
- 1930 Delphic Studios, New York, *Recent Paintings by Thomas H. Benton*, March 3–25, 1929
- 1932 Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, *The Arts of Life in America: A Series of Murals by Thomas Hart Benton*, December 6–13, 1932
- 1935 Ferargil Galleries, New York, *Thomas Hart Benton*, April 1–14, 1935
- 1936 Kansas City Art Institute, Missouri, *Paintings and Drawings by Thomas Hart Benton*, January 1936
- 1937 Associated American Artists Galleries, New York, October–November 1937
- Lakeside Press Galleries, Chicago, Illinois, *A Loan Exhibition of Drawings and Paintings by Thomas Hart Benton*, October 1–November 30, 1937
- 1939 William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art and Mary Atkins Museum of Fine Arts, Kansas City, Missouri, *Thomas Hart Benton Retrospective*, March 20–April 3, 1939
- Associated American Artists Galleries, New York, *Thomas Hart Benton: Retrospective Exhibition*, April 18–May 12, 1939
- Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; and Associated American Artists Galleries, New York, *T.H. Benton Exhibition*, April–July 1939
- 1940 Dallas Museum of Art, Texas, *Thomas Hart Benton*, February 4–25, 1940
- 1941 Associated American Artists Galleries, New York, April 8–May 3, 1941
- 1942 Associated American Artists Galleries, New York, *Year of Peril*, April 1942
- 1946 Associated American Artists Galleries, Chicago, Illinois
- 1951 Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska, *Benton Retrospective*, November 14–December 30, 1951
- 1954 Art Museum of the New Britain Institute, New Britain, Connecticut, *Thomas Hart Benton*
- 1958 The University of Kansas Museum of Art, Lawrence, Kansas, *Thomas Hart Benton*, April 12–May 18, 1958
- 1962 University Art Gallery, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona; Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock, Arkansas; and Springfield Art Museum, Missouri, *Thomas Hart Benton: A Giant in American Art*, October 15, 1962–March 31, 1963
- 1966 Birmingham Arts Festival, Bloomfield Art Association, Michigan, *Thomas Hart Benton Exhibition*, October 1–23, 1966

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Thomas Hart Benton, *Deep South, America Today*, 1930–31. Egg tempera with oil glazing over Permalba on a gesso ground on linen mounted to wood panels with a honeycomb interior, 92 × 117 inches (233.7 × 297.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of AXA Equitable, 2012 (2012.478d). © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY



- 1968 Graham Gallery, New York, *Thomas Hart Benton: A Comprehensive Exhibition of Drawings, Watercolors, Oils and Temperas*, November 26–December 28, 1968
- 1970 Graham Gallery, New York, *Thomas Hart Benton: Pen & Ink Drawings & Washes*, February 7–28, 1970
- Madison Art Center, Wisconsin, *Thomas Hart Benton*, March 22–April 12, 1970
- 1972 Rutgers University Art Gallery, New Brunswick, New Jersey, *Thomas Hart Benton: A Retrospective of his Early Years, 1907–1929*, November 19–December 30, 1972
- 1973 Spiva Art Center, Missouri Southern State College, Joplin, Missouri, *Thomas Hart Benton: A Personal Commemorative*, March 24–April 27, 1973
- 1974 William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Mary Atkins Museum of Fine Arts, Kansas City, Missouri, and Brooks Memorial Art Gallery, Memphis, Tennessee, *Thomas Hart Benton: An Artist's Selection, 1908–1974*, October 12, 1974–January 7, 1975
- 1980 Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, *Benton's Bentons*, July 13–September 13, 1980
- 1981 Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, New York, *Thomas Hart Benton: Synchronist Paintings 1915–1920 from a Private Collection*, December 2, 1981–January 30, 1982
- 1982 Miller Gallery, Cincinnati, Ohio, *Thomas Hart Benton Lithographs*, March 6–April 3, 1982
- 1984 Edith C. Blum Art Institute, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York; Center Gallery, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania; Queens Museum, Flushing, New York; and Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, New York, *Thomas Hart Benton: Chronicler of America's Folk Heritage*, November 3, 1984–July 6, 1985
- 1985 Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, Massachusetts, *Thomas Hart Benton: The America Today Murals*, February 2–August 25, 1985
- 1986 The Boise Gallery of Art, Idaho; Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska; Yellowstone Art Center, Billings, Montana; Utah Museum of Fine Arts, Salt Lake City, Utah; Cheney Cowles Memorial Museum, Spokane, Washington; Lakeview Museum of Art & Sciences, Peoria, Illinois; Fine Arts Center at Cheekwood, Nashville, Tennessee; Center for the Arts, Vero Beach, Florida; Albany Museum of Art, Georgia; Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, New Mexico; Art Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christi, Texas; and Springfield Art Museum, Missouri, *Thomas Hart Benton: An Intimate View*, April 5, 1986–May 29, 1988
- Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock, Arkansas, *Benton in the Ozarks: Selections from the Thomas Hart and Rita P. Benton Testamentary Trusts*, April 18–May 25, 1986
- 1989 Indiana University Art Museum, Bloomington, Indiana, *Thomas Hart Benton and the Indiana Murals: The Making of a Masterpiece*, April 4–May 21, 1989
- The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; The Detroit Institute of Arts, Michigan; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California, *Thomas Hart Benton: An American Original*, April 16, 1989–July 22, 1990
- Hubert Gallery, New York, *Thomas Hart Benton Lithographs: An Exhibition*, November 16–December 3, 1989

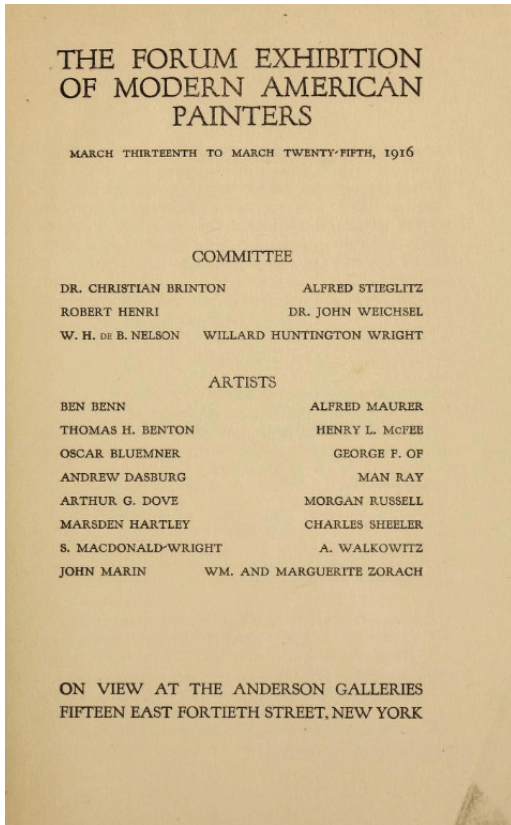
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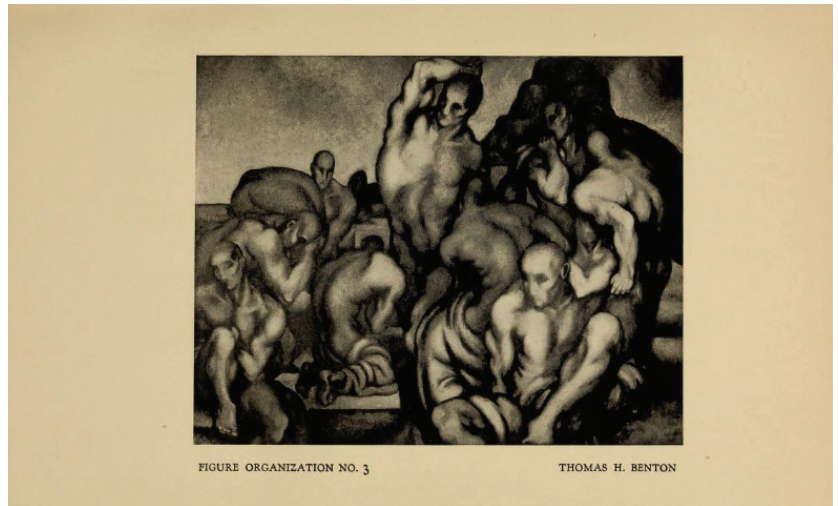
Installation view from *American Epics: Thomas Hart Benton and Hollywood*, 2016, Amon Carter Museum of Art. © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

- 1990 Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington; Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Austin, Texas; and Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota, *Thomas Hart Benton: Drawing from Life*, March 16, 1990–January 6, 1991
- Louis Newman Galleries, Beverley Hills, California, *Thomas Hart Benton: Paintings and Drawings*, May 17–June 7, 1990
- 1991 Hirschl & Adler Galleries, New York, *Benton's America: Works on Paper and Selected Paintings*, January 19–March 2, 1991
- Louis Newman Galleries, Beverley Hills, California, *Thomas Hart Benton: Works on Paper*, June 6–20, 1991
- 1992 Museo d'Arte Moderna della Città Lugano, Villa Malpensata, Switzerland, *Thomas Hart Benton*, September 5–November 15, 1992
- 1998 Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, Tennessee, *Lasting Impressions: Drawings by Thomas Hart Benton*, February 1–March 29, 1998
- Morris Museum of Art, Augusta, Georgia; Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, Nevada; University Art Museum, University of Southwest Louisiana, Lafayette, Louisiana; Louisiana Arts and Science Center, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Mesa Southwest Museum, Arizona; Lauren Rogers Museum of Art, Laurel, Mississippi; York College Museum of Art, Pennsylvania; Frye Art Museum, Seattle, Washington; Knoxville Museum of Art, Tennessee; Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Fort Wayne Museum of Art, Indiana, *On the Road with Thomas Hart Benton: Images of a Changing America*, February 12, 1998–March 18, 2001
- 2000 Owen Gallery, New York, *Thomas Hart Benton: Exhibition of Paintings*, October 14–December 15, 2000
- 2002 Reynolda House Museum of American Art, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, *Passion, Politics, Prohibition: Benton's Bootleggers*, February 28–June 2, 2002
- 2004 Hammer Galleries, New York, *Thomas Hart Benton: Paintings and Works on Paper*, March 15–April 19, 2004
- Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, *Benton and America in the 1930s: Works on Paper*, May 19–September 4, 2004
- 2007 Palmer Museum of Art, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania; The Suzanne H. Arnold Art Gallery, Lebanon Valley College, Annville, Pennsylvania; and Indiana University Museum of Art, Bloomington, Indiana, *Shallow Creek: Thomas Hart Benton and American Waterways*, September 4, 2007–May 18, 2008
- 2008 Owen Gallery, New York, *Benton on the Vineyard*, October 20–December 12, 2008
- 2014 National World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial, Kansas City, Missouri, *Razzle Dazzle*, April 19–October 12, 2014
- The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, *Thomas Hart Benton's America Today Mural Rediscovered*, September 30, 2014–April 19, 2015
- 2015 Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts; The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas; and Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin, *American Epics: Thomas Hart Benton and Hollywood*, June 6, 2015–September 5, 2016
- 2017 Surovek Gallery, Palm Beach, Florida, *Thomas Hart Benton*, February 1–March 22, 2017

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Exhibition catalogue for the 1916 *The Forum Exhibition of Modern American Painters* at Anderson Galleries, New York, featuring *Figure Organization No. 3* by Thomas Hart Benton. © T.H. and R.P. Benton Trusts / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



- Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia, *Thomas Hart Benton and the Navy*, May 18–September 24, 2017
- 2019 Surovek Gallery, Palm Beach, Florida, *Thomas Hart Benton: Mechanics of Form*, February 7–March 15, 2019

## Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1916 Anderson Galleries, New York, *The Forum Exhibition of Modern American Painters*, March 13–25, 1916
- 1923 Architectural League of New York, New York, *38th Annual Exhibition*, January 28–February 24, 1923
- 1924 Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, *119th Annual Exhibition*, February 3–March 23, 1924
- 1932 Museum of Modern Art, New York, *American Paintings and Sculpture, 1862–1932*, October 31, 1932–February 11, 1933
- 1934 Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, *Second Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting*, November 17, 1934–January 10, 1935
- University Gallery, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota, *Contemporary Americans*, February 1–23, 1936

- 1937 Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, Colorado, *Third Annual Exhibition of Paintings by Artists West of the Mississippi*, July 15–August 31, 1937
- Museum of Modern Art, New York; and Musée du Jeu de Paume, Paris, France, *Paintings for Paris (Trois Siècles d'art aux États-Unis)*, November 9, 1937–July 31, 1938
- 1939 M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, California, *Seven Centuries of Painting: A Loan Exhibition of Old and Modern Masters*, December 29, 1939–January 28, 1940
- Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, *Survey of American Painting*, October 24–December 15, 1940
- 1942 Springfield Museum of Fine Arts, Massachusetts, *American Life*, November 22–December 31, 1942
- Art Gallery of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, *Museums' Choice: Paintings by Contemporary Americans*, February 2–25, 1945
- 1958 New Britain Museum of Art, Connecticut, *Contemporary American Prints, Paintings, Drawings From the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Albert L. Hydeman*, May–June 1958
- 1965 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, *Three Centuries of American Painting*, April 9–October 17, 1965

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Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, Iowa, *Mid-America in the Thirties: The Regionalist Art of Thomas Hart Benton, John Stuart Curry and Grant Wood*, December 10, 1965–January 16, 1966

1970 United States Pavilion, Japan World Exposition, Osaka, *Images of America: American Painting*, March 15–September 13, 1970

1975 Brooks Memorial Art Gallery, Memphis, Tennessee, *A Question of Regionalism: Lithographs by Thomas Hart Benton, John Stuart Curry, Grant Wood*, 1975

The New Britain Museum of American Art, Connecticut, *Reflections of Our Heritage: The Regionalists, Benton, Curry, Wood*, November 20–December 31, 1975

1976 The American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, *Memorial Exhibition: Thomas Hart Benton, George L.K. Morris, Michael Rapuano*, March 8–April 4, 1976

1977 State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, Russia; State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, Russia; and Palace of Art, Minsk, Belarus, *Representations of America*, December 15, 1977–August 15, 1978

1978 Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas; Des Moines Art Center, Iowa; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California; Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York; and Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts, Ohio, *Synchronism and American Color Abstraction, 1910–1925*, January 24, 1978–March 24, 1979

1979 Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois, *100 Artists, 100 Years*, November 23, 1979–January 20, 1980

1980 Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Germany; and Kunstverein Hamburg, Germany, *Amerika: Traum und Depression 1920/40*, November 9, 1980–February 15, 1981

1982 Andrew Crispo Gallery, New York, *American Works on Paper*, February–March 1982

1983 Davenport Museum of Art, Iowa, *American Works on Paper: 100 Years of American Art History*, December 1983–January 1987

1989 University Art Museum, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, *American Life & Lore: Thomas Hart Benton & the Associated American Artists, from the Hugh Taylor Collection*, September 11–November 5, 1989

1995 Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minnesota; Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; Saint Louis Art Museum, Missouri; and Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio, *Made in America: Ten Centuries of American Art*, October 8, 1995–September 22, 1996

1996 Hirschl & Adler Galleries, New York, *Picturing Gotham: New York City Through the Eyes of Its Artists*, January–March 1996



Benton with Grant Wood and John Stuart Curry in Benton's Kansas City home. Photo credit: Townsend Godsey Photographs, P0153

1999 The Forbes Magazine Collection, New York, *200 Years of American Art*, May 26–September 4, 1999

2000 Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, *Highlights from the Permanent Collection: From Hopper to Mid-Century*, February 25, 2000–May 20, 2006

2003 Hammer Galleries, New York, *19th and 20th Century American Collection*, April 1–May 3, 2003

2005 Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, *Bingham to Benton: The Midwest as Muse*, February 5–July 31, 2005

2011 Brooklyn Museum, New York; Dallas Museum of Art, Texas; and Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio, *Youth and Beauty: Art of the American Twenties*, October 28, 2011–September 16, 2012

2021 Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska; and The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, *American Art Deco: Designing for the People, 1918–1939*, June 5–January 8, 2023

Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., *Artist to Artist*, October 1, 2021–May 18, 2025

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## Selected Public Collections

Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas

Brooklyn Museum, New York

Detroit Institute of Art, Michigan

De Young Museum, San Francisco, California

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri

The Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Museum of Modern Art, New York

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

New Britain Museum of American Art, Connecticut

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania

Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

## Illustrated Literature

H. L. Mencken, George Jean Nathan, and Willard Huntington Wright, *Europe after 8:15*, New York: John Lane, 1914  
First book illustrated by Benton including eight full-page illustrations.

Leo Huberman, *We, the People*, New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1932

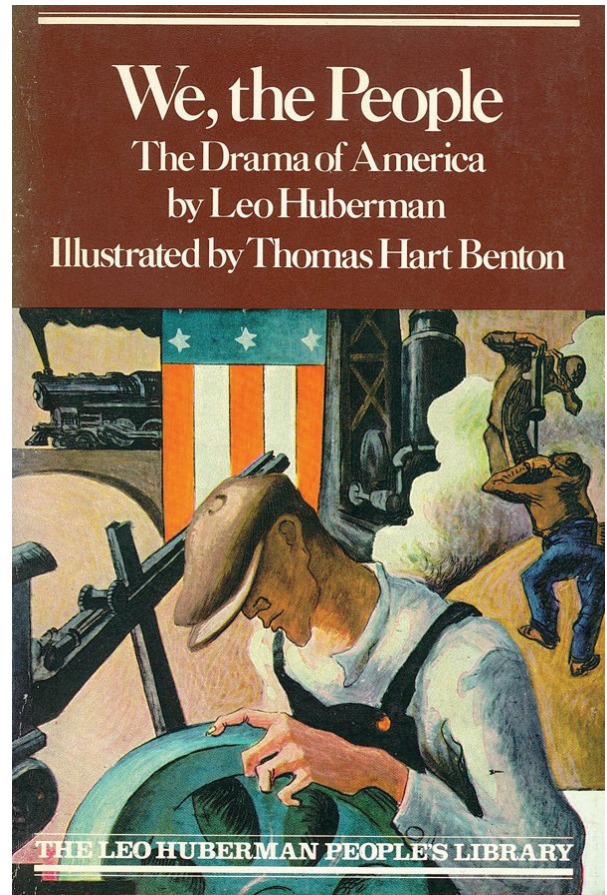
May Childs Nerney, *Thomas A. Edison: A Modern Olympian*, New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas, 1934

Ella Enslow, *Schoolhouse in the Foothills*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1937

Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Limited Editions Club, 1939  
Benton chose to illustrate *Tom Sawyer* after being awarded the Limited Editions Club Fellowship in 1937. Each volume of the run of 1500 is individually numbered and signed by the illustrator. The success of Benton's first collaboration with the Club allowed him to produce four more illustrated volumes, including two other novels by Mark Twain.

John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, New York: The Limited Editions Club, 1940

Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, New York: The Limited Editions Club, 1942



Leo Huberman, *We, the People*, New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1932, featuring illustrations by Benton

Jesse Stuart, *Taps for Private Tussie*, New York: E. P. Dutton, 1943

Benjamin Franklin, *Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography and Other Writings*, New York: Random U.S.A., 1944

Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*, New York: The Limited Editions Club, 1944

Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail*, Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1946

Virginia S. Eifert, *Three Rivers South: A Story of Young Abe Lincoln*, New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1953

Thad Snow, *From Missouri: An American Farmer Looks Back*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1954

Lynn Riggs, *Green Grow the Lilacs*, Norman, Oklahoma: The Limited Editions Club, 1954

Benton produced eight full-page lithographs for this novel which served as the basis for Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical *Oklahoma!*



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