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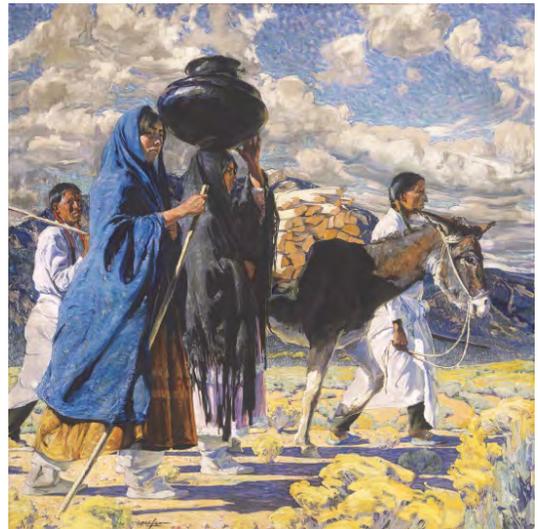
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A Place in the Sun: The Southwest Paintings of Walter Ufer and E. Martin Hennings to Debut at the Denver Art Museum

Distinctive American art painted during the 20th century is explored through the lens of two lifelong friends

DENVER – Oct. 1, 2015 – This December, the Denver Art Museum (DAM) will debut an exhibition featuring work by Walter Ufer and E. Martin Hennings, two German-American painters, Taos Society of Artists members and lifelong friends. Organized by the DAM, *A Place in the Sun: The Southwest Paintings of Walter Ufer and E. Martin Hennings* will feature 38 bold, large-scale paintings by two artists who were determined to create a distinctive American art by living and working in Taos, New Mexico. The exhibition will be on view Dec. 13, 2015 through April 24, 2016.

“This coming year we are placing a strong focus on American art with exhibitions featuring artists like Ufer and Hennings, as well as Fritz Scholder and Andrew and Jamie Wyeth,” said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. “All of these DAM-organized, traveling exhibitions are rich in narrative and play a part in showing the development of American art in the 20th century.”



Walter Ufer, *Going East*, 1917. Oil on canvas; 51 x 51 in. The Eugene B. Adkins Collection at Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa, and the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

A Place in the Sun is the first exhibition to present the major award-winning paintings by Ufer and Hennings. Curated by Thomas Brent Smith, Director of the Petrie Institute of Western American Art and curator of Western American Art at the DAM, the exhibition is a culmination of six years of scholarly research exploring the parallels and differences between the personal and artistic journeys of Ufer and Hennings. Today, Ufer and Hennings are primarily known by audiences well versed in western American art. *A Place in the Sun* aims to rectify this and place these artists back within the pantheon of great American painters.

The exhibition will begin with strikingly similar paintings by each artist, then continue with Ufer's first visits to the American Southwest coinciding with the beginning of World War I and will conclude with Henning's works from 1945 at the end of World War II. *A Place in the Sun* will also feature Ufer's award-winning work between 1917 and 1923, including *Going East* and Hennings' most outstanding work throughout his career, including *A Friendly Encounter*.

“Though these two artists were closely connected and painted in the same place and time, my hope is that visitors will walk away seeing them as individuals,” said Smith. “This exhibition also will help visitors understand each artist's place in the larger context of American art.”

By examining the artists as a pair, the exhibition tells a complex narrative about aspects of American society during the interwar period and moves beyond their lifelong friendship, shared training and artistic aspirations.



E. Martin Hennings, *A Friendly Encounter*, about 1922. Oil on canvas; 45 x 50 in. Denver Art Museum: The Roath Collection by exchange; William Sr. and Dorothy Harmsen Collection by exchange; funds from Henry Roath, Lanny and Sharon Martin, 2013 Collectors' Choice, and The Second Decade Fund, 2014.28

Similarities between the two artists extend beyond their German-American heritage and their decision to train in Munich. Both artists hoped to build their careers in the spirited art environment of Chicago, but ultimately established themselves in Taos, New Mexico. Both artists gravitated toward subjects drawn from the region's rich Native American and Hispanic culture, using the serene landscape and vibrant light of the Southwest.

While the artists painted similar subjects, it is Ufer and Hennings' artistic styles that truly differentiate their work. Ufer painted *alla prima*, in which layers of wet paint are applied to previous layers of wet paint. Hennings adopted the German version of art nouveau called *jugendstil*, a style of art that is inspired by natural forms and structures in flowers, plants, trees and curved lines.

Ufer and Hennings' bold, bright paintings of the Southwest were well-received in the West, Midwest and beyond. As a result, the artists climbed the ranks of the greatest contemporary American painters, winning top honors at the nation's most prestigious juried competitions where artists were expected to present their most notable work. Competitions were evidence of their stature and importance among American artists during their time.

A Place in the Sun will be on view Dec. 13, 2015 through April 24, 2016 and then will travel to the Philbrook Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma, from May 2016 through August 2016.

A 250-page fully illustrated publication co-published by DAM and University of Oklahoma Press will accompany the exhibition and features abundant new research and scholarship revealing many previously unknown aspects of their life and work, in particular their time studying in Munich. It will be available in December 2015.

A Place in the Sun: The Southwest Paintings of Walter Ufer and E. Martin Hennings is organized by the Petrie Institute of Western American Art, Denver Art Museum. It is presented with generous support from James J. Volker Family Trust, Mary and Gary Buntmann, Carolyn and Robert Barnett, the donors to the Petrie Institute of Western American Art endowment, the donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign and the citizens who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Promotional support is provided by *5280 Magazine*, CBS4, Comcast Spotlight and *The Denver Post*.

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