

CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION Polly Thayer (Starr) A CELEBRATION OF THE ARTIST'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

NOVEMBER 2 TO DECEMBER 31, 2004



contemporary

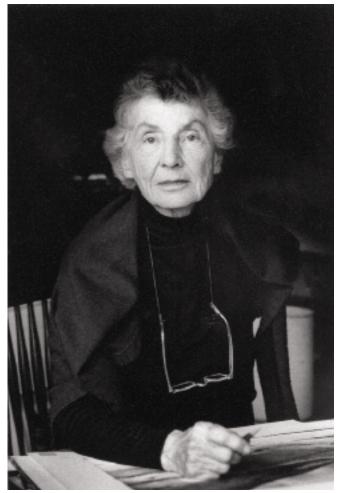


Photo by Steven Trefonides

AN APPRECIATION

Polly Thayer commands our admiration and respect for myriad reasons. She is a kind and compassionate person, a quiet philanthropist who has benefited innumerable charitable and humanitarian causes. As an artist, Polly's rich life experiences, fueled by endless curiosity and the courage to challenge the status quo, have provided the basis for her innovative, highly expressive artistic images. In all things, Polly is a taskmaster for getting things right.

The gallery's history with Polly dates back to 1933 when she was part of a group exhibition that featured thirty-six artists, including such luminaries as Frank Benson, Edmund Tarbell, Frederick Bosley, and Ives Gammell, all teachers from Boston's famous Museum School. Polly's oil portrait,



Diana, Private collection

Diana, broke with the school's usual portrayals of passive women of leisure. One reviewer noted, "You feel the intense, nervous energy and intelligence behind the pose. There is character in the face . . ." It must have been a heady experience for a young woman of twenty-eight, even though, because of the devastating effects of the Great Depression, not one painting sold from the exhibition.



Photography taken September, 2001 duing Polly's last exhibition at Vose Galleries From right left, Polly Thayer (Starr), Terry Vose, Bill Vose and Marcia Vose

Polly had her first one-person show at the gallery in 1950, and her exhibition here in 2001 marked the galleries' return to handling living artists after a forty-year hiatus. In this, our fourth show of her work, we pay tribute to her remarkable artistic abilities, always informed by her lively intellect. Our lives are all the richer for knowing Polly Thayer, a woman whose courageous spirit and determination make for a powerful role model.

Marcia L. Vose

Abbot W. Vose

Robert C. Vose III

FOREWORD

I was star-struck, looking around Polly Thayer's elegant high-ceilinged rooms on the water side of Beacon Street. Light streamed in and there were paintings everywhere. I felt as though I had walked through the looking glass into a world of art I knew only from dusty books and brittle newspapers. I was a research assistant at the Museum of Fine Arts, accompanying Trevor Fairbrother as he prepared his ground-breaking exhibition, *The Bostonians: Painters of an Elegant Age.* It was 1985, and I was hooked.

I've visited Polly Thayer many times since then. At first the questions I asked were about other painters, members of the Boston School with whom Thayer is most often grouped. Soon I wanted to know more about Polly herself, not only about the paintings and drawings she created, but also about the roles that she played and the choices she made as artist, wife, and mother. I was not surprised when she became the star of my exhibition, A Studio of Her Own, in 2001.

Polly has offered me many things, not only art history lessons. I ply her with questions about bygone days, asking what Philip Hale was like as a teacher or how she combined professional ambition with domestic responsibility in the 1920s and 1930s. And she always asks me a question in return: "What's happening right now," she says, never choosing to end our conversation in the world of the past. "What's it like now?," she wants to know. May we all hold equally fast to that continuing sense of wonder.

Erica E. Hirshler Croll Senior Curator of Paintings Art of the Americas Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Centennial Exhibition Polly Thayer (Starr)

A CELEBRATION OF THE ARTIST'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

It is a remarkable event when anyone reaches one hundred years, but when there is a life as creative, as meditative, and as fully lived as Polly Thayer Starr's, the occasion is one to celebrate, indeed.

Polly came of age in a world of privileged wealth and learning, but understood loss early; her father died when she was eleven and her elder sister died of an undiagnosed brain tumor in 1923, when Polly was nineteen. During that same year she was poised to make a choice for herself in what must have seemed an uncertain world. She liked theater and she liked to draw. She wasn't ready to settle down. Somewhat nervously, but with the encouragement of her mother, she enrolled at the Museum School to study with Philip Hale. By the end of that first year she surprised herself by how well she did, and she began to focus on drawing with a passion that has guided her art throughout her life. She left Boston for Paris, and in 1930 took a studio in New York. At the same time she embarked upon the journey of unlearning what she had

learned, freeing herself from the constraints of academic training, while retaining what, of her early training, was valuable. She began to use her art to go beyond copying from nature, to express something about her understanding of what she saw.

Drawing is the backbone of Polly's work; she revels in the intensity of seeing. In a sense, she loses herself in the looking and finds herself in the form underneath. As Dorothy Koval suggests in her thoughtful article below, Polly uses drawing to penetrate her subject. She returns again and again, now drawing very precisely, now blocking out abstract forms, until the essence of what she sees is laid open. Her art, then, throughout her extraordinary career, is traditional, modern and postmodern; it is ever relevant. It is about process, the process of seeing, the process of recording, and the process of expression.

All of us at Vose are honored and delighted to celebrate Polly's 100th birthday with this exhibition of one hundred works of art spanning her entire career. We are grateful for the contributions of Erica Hirshler, Croll Senior Curator of Paintings in the Art of Americas Department of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Dorothy Koval, who has worked closely with Polly for the past seven years. Join us in lifting a glass to a superb artist and an extraordinary woman.

-Nancy Allyn Jarzombek Managing Director



LIBERATING THE BRIDGE

By Dorothy Koval

What an explosion of steps and towers we encounter in Polly Thayer's unorthodox view of Pont Alexandre III, considered the most elegant bridge in Paris! This architectural vision is disconcerting at first. Although the wide angled stairway and the tiny figure in the heights seem to insist on including us in the painting, we are forced to pause and orient ourselves before we know how to take the invitation.

Part of what makes the painting extraordinary is its perspective; and part of the reason for that is that when she conceived of the painting, Thayer herself was seeing Paris from an unusual point of view. She already knew the city well — she had spent many months there as a child and young woman with her mother, had studied art at the Academié Colorossi and had worked in a studio of her own not far from this bridge, returning on her honeymoon with



Pont Alexandre III, 1965, oil on masonite, 48 x 40 inches



Study for Pont Alexandre III, graphite on paper, 17 x 14 inches
Th-208



Study for Pont Alexandre III, water color on paper, 8 x 6 inches
Th-204



Study for Pont Alexandre III, water color on paper, $15^{3/4}$ x $11^{3/4}$ inches Th-206



Study for Pont Alexandre III, oil on canvas board, 16 x 12 inches Th-185

Donald Starr and later with her daughters. But in the summer of 1964, she was living in a boat on the Seine, moored near the Ile St. Louis.

Paris was a different world viewed from the river, a quieter, less social world – if you exclude the fact that the painter was one of four adults and two teenagers sharing quarters in a small power yacht. But Thayer was not the passionate sailor that her husband was, and it may have been with some relief that she left her fellow travelers in the *Tansy* and betook herself with easel and sketchpads to the Quai d'Orsay.

She was fascinated by many aspects of the Pont Alexandre III, which spans the Seine in a single low arch connecting the Champs Elysées with Les Invalides. When the Pont Alexandre III opened officially at the Universal Exhibition of 1900, it was criticized as being a conglomerate of the work of too many artists, probably a consequence of its origin as a diplomatic gesture intended to cement the alliance between Russia and France. Trying to understand what attracted her to the artistically teeming structure, Thayer drew carved lions in pen and ink and made watercolor sketches of the golden Pegasus sculptures rising on their pillars through the morning mist ("Much lighter - all ablaze," she noted to herself at the edge of the page). But it was not until she retreated again to the lower level of the quai that she found what she was seeking. For it was not the Pont Alexandre III she had known previously that held her

attention; it was the one that had been revealed to her just above water level.

She returned many times to explore her domain. Not only were there no curious onlookers or trivial interruptions - she rarely saw anyone but an occasional *clochard*, one of the special souls for whom the banks of the Seine are home – but there was a confluence of light, space, form and temporal grace which responded to questions she had been asking for some time. "I wanted to speak about spaces," she remembers. "It was a place of peace, a place for working things out."

Several sources of interest at the back of Thayer's mind may now have come into play. One was a painting of figures reclining on a wide flight of steps in Venice which she had purchased from Eugene Berman at his Paris studio in 1932. Another was the photographic work of Albert Monier, whose lyrical images of the banks of the Seine in morning and evening light epitomized Paris for millions of visitors (through his black and white postcards.) Her children, Vicki and Dinah, would search them out everywhere, and in later years Vicki became friends with the photographer. "He made a deep impression on me," Thayer says, "and I got to thinking in terms of bridges and spaces." There is also, among the sketches she made of the Pont Alexandre III, a newspaper clipping of a painting by Bernard Perlin depicting a kind of apotheosis of the Spanish Steps in Rome, a grand flight of innumerable steps leading up

to a well of light and finishing in the towers of Trinita dei Monti.

These images have few specifics in common with Thayer's painting, but in all of them there are the steps, and a sense of opening out toward light and space. It seems possible as well that the etchings of Piranesi's Carceri series, with their fragmentary stairways, vast spaces and looping entanglements, played a part in the painting's vision, although Thayer's painting has the reverse effect, leading to liberation instead of captivity. There is a kind of visual double-entendre here, almost a conversation between steps and bridge. If we think about it, we know that the physical bridge turns back toward the foreground of the painting in the upper left corner, and crosses the Seine from the direction opposite that in which we would be climbing; yet it is hard to avoid the impression that the real subject of this painting is a bridge to the beyond, and the dazzling peculiarity of the journey to get there. The energetic little figure leaning out over the balustrade with arms stretched wide gives a sense of scale to the setting at the same time that it seems to verify that the ascent can be made. It does not matter that the flapping figure might be a tourist from the upper world being silly. It is the fact that there is a relationship that counts. Even while, as Wordsworth observed on Westminster Bridge, "all that mighty heart is lying still," there is a heartbeat in it.

The sketches Thayer made on the way to her final painting provide us with a fascinating chronicle of her process of tracking down and illuminating her goal. Once she got the scent of something that was significant to her, she went on to permeate herself with all its elements. She approached it again and again from various points of view and in assorted media until she had clarified her vision of it. Ultimately she internalized the physical facts so thoroughly that she felt entitled to extrapolate at will. In some cases, as with her thistle series, there was no one finished piece, the whole cycle being the work at hand. In others, as with the formidable rock landscapes she drew at Charles Hopkinson's home Sharksmouth, there was no need for preliminary studies: "You were living in them, had them for breakfast, lunch and dinner!" she exclaims. The dunes for "Incorporeal," the curving expanses of snow and ice in "White World," the clay cliffs of Gay Head responding to the late afternoon sun, and the curves and steps of Pont Alexander III she plunged into again and again. Her cyclamen, another bridge to the absolute, were not an evolution so much as a sequence of forays into the visible unknown.

The order in which the preliminary drawings for the Pont Alexandre III were made is not certain, since Thayer's vision is no longer adequate to differentiate them, but she agrees that the half dozen extant sketches or watercolors of sculptures on their pillars must have been done before she determined her focus. The next stage would probably have been several watercolors at varying degrees of distance from the two Pegasus-topped towers at the Right Bank end of the bridge. At this point the humans behind the balustrades wear colorful clothes and talk to each other, or lean against the ramparts more like the languid characters on Berman's Venetian steps than like the calligraphic figures in the finished painting. The statues still have individuality, although they are becoming increasingly schematized. As the artist settles her focuses downward and closer to the supporting structure, the golden winged horses (which symbolize various kinds of Fame) are cut out of the picture, and the statues become massive presences rather than representations.

In the two oil-on-paper miniatures that probably followed, the patterns of the stonework have been sublimated in the volume of the tower, while the great shadow created by the stairs has become an important compositional element rather than a simple observation of light sources. The grey and white of



Detail of Pont Alexandre III

Study for Pont Alexandre III, oil on paper, 51/4 x 4 inches

the stone is developing overtones of gold and rose. Thayer is also experimenting with the figures. The leaning figure part way down the steps is gone, as are several hinted figures near the top of the steps, leaving only the two at the balustrade. In one of the small oils they seem to be talking to each other, the red-shirted one gesturing toward her friend, while in another they both seem to have turned around to look up at the looming, almost ghostly profile of La France, with her allegorical scepter pointing aloft. Several small charcoal studies seem to show them looking calmly over the railing, while in a third and larger one the most lively figure has sprouted a hat and is looking upward and away from the viewer with arms held wide. By this time the balustrade itself has nearly disappeared, giving way to a broad band of curved stone, echoed by another darker curve, and bearing only slight shadows to suggest the columns.

Eventually Thayer had to pack up her sketches and cross the ocean back to Boston. Once home, she decided on the scale of the work and made a small charcoal superimposed with a grid to help her realize the design on the canvas she had chosen. The oil of the Pont Alexandre III, which was among the largest she ever created, was painted in the studio at the top of her Beacon Street townhouse overlooking the

Charles River and the MIT bridge, with which she had carried on a very different dialogue for years. In the final work the line of the active but monochrome and monosex figure, stretching out over the void from the tower (which at this angle seems vastly more impressive than the tame bulwarks we started with) almost parallels the line of the pointing scepter in the monument above. Beginning at the dark door in the lower right, the viewer has little choice but to follow the path of the stairway while trying to make sense of his surroundings. The steps are now precisely if delicately indicated by thin parallel lines, and although we cannot see that the monument on the upper left represents a lion, we have the distinct sense that the entrance to whatever is beyond the stairs is both protected and honored by the guardians that flank it. The stones that shape the tower have come alive with light and color reflected from the river. An extraordinary juxtaposition of formal geometry with personal vertigo causes the painting to vibrate with poetic energy.

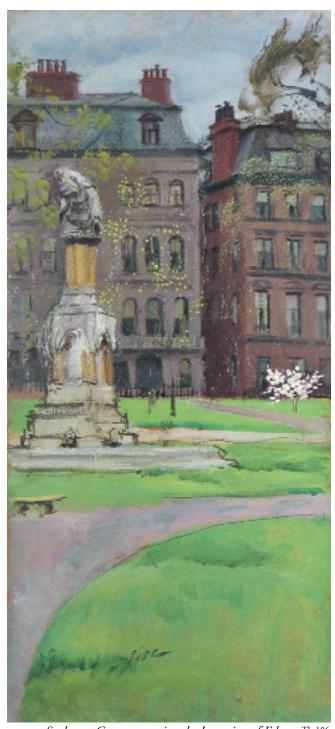
It is perhaps not inappropriate to close with some thoughts from one of Thayer's favorite poets, Emily Dickinson:

Faith—is the Pierless Bridge
Supporting what We see
Unto the Scene that We do not—
Too slender for the eye

It bears the Soul as bold As it were rocked in Steel With Arms of Steel at either side— It joins—behind the Veil

To what, could We presume The Bridge would cease to be To Our far, vacillating Feet A first Necessity.

Dorothy Koval lives with her artist husband, Dominic, in Vermont.
She is the author of "Poetry of Hand and Spirit: Polly Thayer (Starr)" for Poetry of Hand and Spirit: Paintings and Drawings by Polly
Thayer (Starr) (Vose, 2001). She has researched the family papers of
William Lloyd Garrison, Robert Grosvenor Valentine and Zoltan
Haraszki. She is currently co-authoring Vanderbilt Scion, Memoirs of a
Modern Knight-Errant, with Harry C. Cushing IV. A friend of the Starr
family since childhood, she began working with Polly Thayer in 1997.

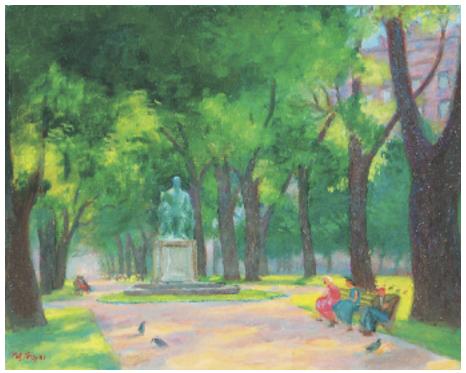


Sculpture Commemorating the Invention of Ether, Th-186

Boston Public Garden

Oil on board

23^{3/4} x 11 inches



Commonwealth Avenue Mall, oil on canvas board, 14 x 18 inches

Th-184



Seated Among the Trees, oil on canvas board, 9 x 12 inches

Th-200



Polly seated next to her mother, Ethel Randolph Thayer, flanked by her sister, Eleanor, and brother James, ca. 1907

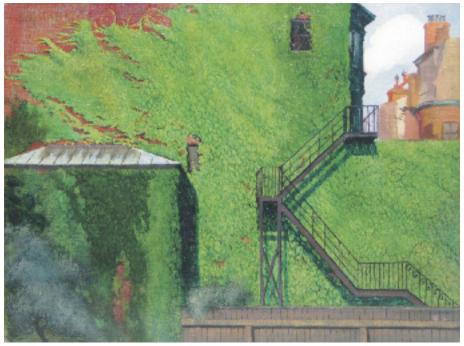
"Father's side of the family was from Concord, the Old Manse. I used to visit there. His father was a professor at Harvard Law School... On Mother's side of the family, Connecticut was the family seat, and that was mostly ministers."

PTS to Robert Brown, May 12, 1995.



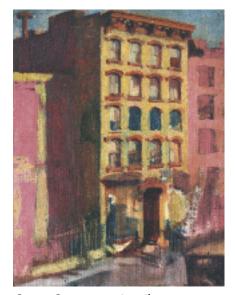
Back Bay Snow Oil on board 16^{3/4} x 21 inches

Th-193



Beacon Street Ivy, ca. 1965, oil on canvas board, 12 x 16 inches

Th-195



Sun on Stone, ca. 1950, oil on canvas board, 10 x 8 inches



Back Bay Autumn, ca. 1950, oil on canvas board, 10 x 8 inches



Polly Thayer in Hingham, ca. 1910

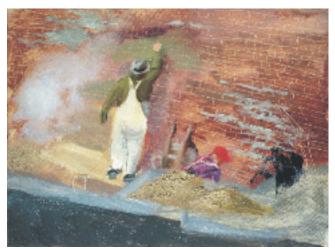
"Life in the city as a young child was, well, we rollerskated on the Esplanade, days on end—that was great fun—and then mayor Curtis's two daughters were just a block up, and they were a very lively, high-spirited pair. My sister and I played endless games of every kind—hide an seek and everything you can think of—for years, and that I remember with great pleasure."

PTS to Robert Brown, May 12, 1995



View from Copp's Hill Burial Ground, 1930s, oil on board, 16 x 20 inches

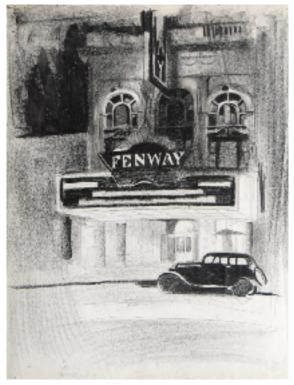




Working on the Walls, oil on canvas board, 9 x 12 inches



Sunrise, ca. 1935, oil on canvas board, 16 x 12 inches



Fenway, conte crayon on paper, 22 x 17 inches Th-242



Boston Townhouses, charcoal on paper, 23^{3/4} x 17^{1/2} inches



Polly seated on a bench in Hingham at her summer home. ca. 1916

Polly's mother arranged for her to take drawing lessons from Beatrice Van Ness, a student of Benson, Tarbell, and Hale, several times a week, while Polly was in grade school.

"I guess Miss Van Ness must have been a pretty good teacher. She said afterwosrds she never thought I could progress an inch, that I covered myself with charcoal trying to sharpen my stick. Grimiest looking subjects. . . I loved it!"

PTS to Robert Brown, May 12, 1995



Above the Fenway
Oil on board
40 x 22 inches

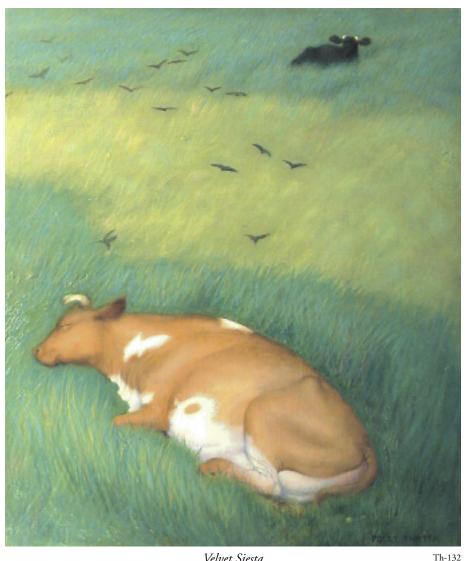


Distances
Oil on canvas board
9 x 12 inches



My Mother's Trees, Hingham Oil on canvas 21 x 25 inches

Th-219



Velvet Siesta
Oil on canvas board
26 x 22^{3/4} inches



Polly as a member of Cercle Francais, during the production of *Tartuffe*, ca. 1923

"We graduated in '21, and then that next winter I made my debut and I don't think I tried to work that winter. There were balls, there were dances every night."

Polly traveled to China with her mother and brother; upon her return she entered the Museum School in the fall of 1923.

"I remember saying to Mother, being very nervous about it, that I'd be completely out-classed, they'd undoubtedly all be very experienced and know much more than I did. So it was rather a surprise at the end of that first year to find that I had most of the prizes. I had to shift gears on it."

PTS to Robert Brown, May 12, 1995

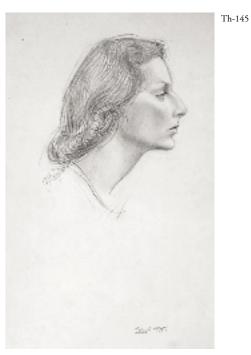


Th-0

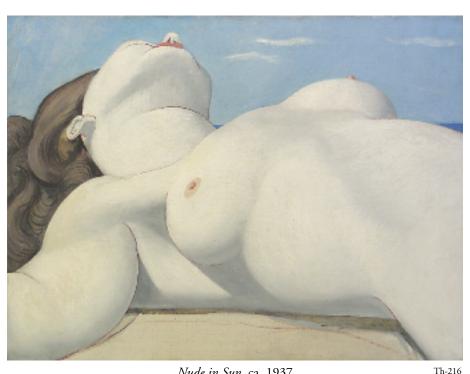
Portrait of John Viscomo, oil on canvas, 35 x 27 inches



Portrait of Evarts Scudder, charcoal on paper, $20^{1/2} \times 15^{3/4}$ inches



Self Portrait, graphite on paper, 11^{3/8} x 8^{1/4} inches



Nude in Sun, ca. 1937 Oil on canvas 18 x 24 inches



Polly as Clytemnestra in the oppening production of William Alfred's *Agamemnon*, 1953

"You did a nude in a week, and you worked all day on it. You began by outlining it. You established the form in the first two days, then you carved the detail for the next four. ... Your drawing became as faithful as it could possibly be made, comparing the plumb line and dimishing glass, and this ruler with the paper on it. That took quite a while. Then you blocked in the shadows, just as you might do with a photograph. You blocked in the area with the heaviest charcoal you had, and then you stumped the charcoal so it would be very smooth – I loved this process! ... You can't imagine the patience that I - we - used, but I loved it, as I say, every second of it!"

PTS to Robert Brown, May 12, 1995: on Philip Hale's teaching methods



Pont Alexandre III, 1965, oil on masonite, 48 x 40 inches

Th-220



Th-218 Interior, Rouen Cathedral, charcoal and watercolor on paper,

23 x 171/2 inches



The Dordogne France, 1946, oil on canvas board, 9 x 12 inches



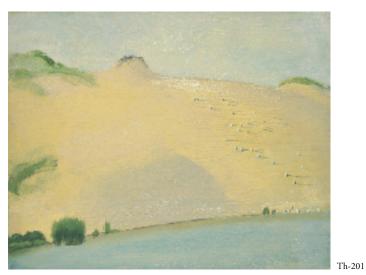
Polly with her cat, Hunya, in Paris, 1930

"Art, as I never dreamed it could be, is a daily and vital interest — it is more important than business, than politics, than eating, even! You cannot think what the effect of it is when always among a group of my fellows at home I have had to keep my greatest interests hooded, or if I mentioned painting it was only to bore, as 'talking shop' or 'being precious.'"

PTS to Donald Starr, Paris, July 1930

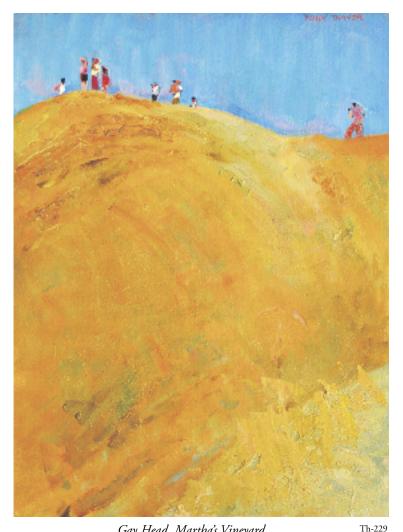


Incorporeal, ca. 1960, oil on canvas board, 24 x 30 inches



Provincetown, ca. 1960, oil on board, 10 x 12 inches

20



Gay Head, Martha's Vineyard
Oil on canvas board
16 x 12 inches



Polly on a camel during a trip to Egypt, 1965

"I think my approach has always been to see what the form — if you do some really good looking, good seeing — what the form will reveal of what's underneath. That was what I was taught early on and that stuck. ... To approach it in a simple-minded way and just see how much you can say, how much will come through if you do exactly what you are looking at — seeing it prayerfully, I mean concentrating, really intensely."

PTS to Robert Brown, May 30, 1995



House in Landscape, ca.1940, oil on canvas board, 12 x16 inches



Engulfed in Green, ca. 1940, oil on canvas board, 12 x 16 inches



Th-102

Going Home, oil on canvas board, 16 x 11 inches



Sun on Gables, ca. 1937, oil on canvas, 20 x 24 inches





Barn, ca. 1946, oil on canvas, 17 x 21 inches





Polly Thayer Starr, ca. 1940

"Polly Thayer's landscapes at Contemporary Arts . . . have unlimited charm and fascination. The subjects are nothing more complicated than houses and trees - the houses set forth in something of Hopper's crystal clear unreality, the trees studied and felt and reduced to their essentials of growth in brushwork soft and rich as velvet . . . she is also an A-1 draftsman, and after noticing how cleverly she follows the tufts and swirls, how she breaks her textures for variety, you realize that these innocent visions are arrived at through a sophisticated selection process."

Rosamund Frost, review of PTS's exhibition at the Contemporary Arts Gallery in New York, *Art News*, Nov. 15 – 31, 1941.



Vicki in Pink Robe, ca. 1960, oil on canvas board, 24 x 20 inches



Dinah Reading, ca. 1955, oil on panel, 24 x 30 inches



Sketching, graphite on paper, 71/2 x 9 inches



Self Portrait, 1989, charcoal on paper 25 x 19 inches



Polly with her daughter Victoria, ca. 1941

By the early 1940s, Polly found herself with a growing family, an increasing dedication to the Society of Friends, and a gregarious husband who loved travel, sports and club life.

"The development of what painting was going to mean for me [took a turn] due to exigencies of time. I've read somewhere that Cézanne didn't go to his mother's funeral because it would have taken a day from his painting. It got to be that kind of a choice for me, practically."

PTS to Robert Brown, Feb. 1, 1996

Th-243



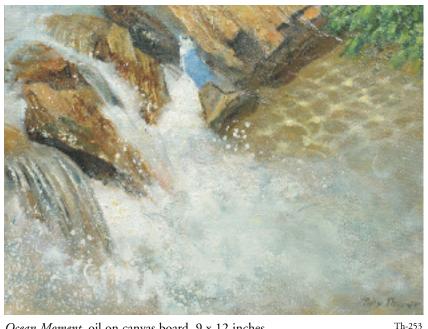
The Other Side, crayon and charcoal on paper, 20 x 25 inches

Th-246



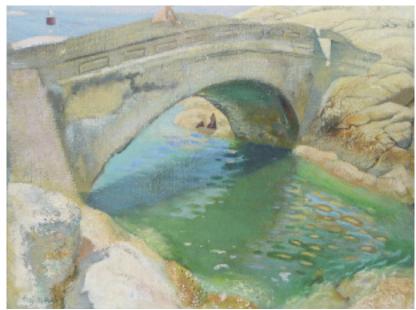
Th-259

Rocks by the Shore, ca. 1959, oil on canvas board, 12 x 16 inches



Ocean Moment, oil on canvas board, 9 x 12 inches





Study for Rock and Bridge, Cohasset, Two, 1959, oil on canvas board, 12 x 16 inches

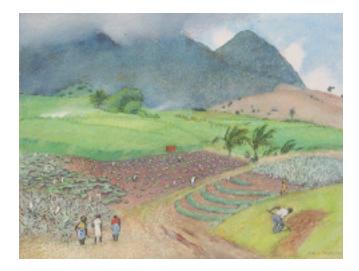
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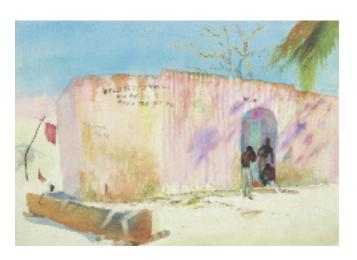
Polly and Donald Starr, ca. 1939

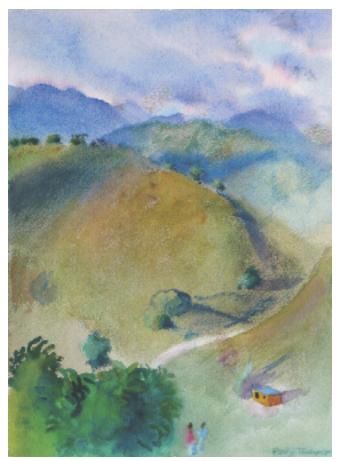
"In middle age, when visiting Edward Forbes, then director of the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard, Donald had his first experience of painting. The occasion was Forbes's initiation of what he called "the Painters' Weekend," a tradition which he continued until his death. Our host announced that all present at the house party were going to paint... Donald weakly demurred, protesting that he had never had a brush in his hand, except for house or deck paint, but Cousin Edward remained unmoved. There being no alternative, and supplied with appropriate materials, Donald drove off with the party to try his luck. ... That night, Donald's maiden effort showed up well against the best of the professional paintings—a perfectly realized, charming watercolor.

PTS, memorial book for Donald Starr, St. Botolph Club, Boston.









Clouds and Mountains, St. Kitts Watercolor on paper $14^{1/4}$ x $10^{1/4}$ inches

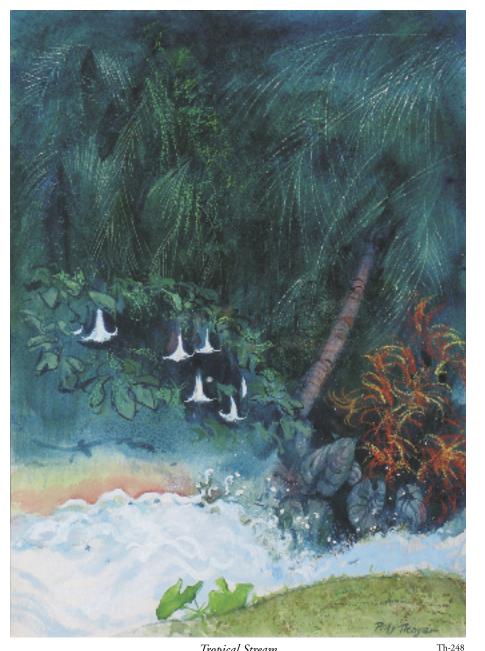
Th-241

Top left: Farm, St. Kitts, ink and watercolor on paper, $11^{1/2}$ x 16 inches

Th-254

Middle left: Island Expanse, ink and watercolor on paper, $_{\text{Th-250}}$ 12 x $_{\text{15}^{1/2}}$ inches

Bottom left: Jamaica, watercolor on paper, 14 x 20 inches



Tropical Stream
Watercolor, gouache and pastel on paper $15 \times 11^{1/2}$ inches



Polly, 1950s

"The sun burns and heals and shines either in full blaze or through thin clouds that diffuse its light so delicately it seems a world of mother-of-pearl....

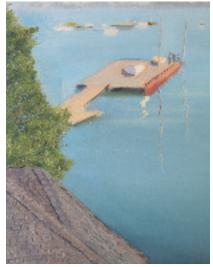
Today for the first time it is raining in the daytime. It is really dark but so warm the damp smells deliciously. I feel like an earthworm. The rain rattles on the palms like hail. Everything in the tropics is so extravagant! It appeals to me tempermentally right down the backbone."

PTS to May Sarton, Nassau, March 16, 1936

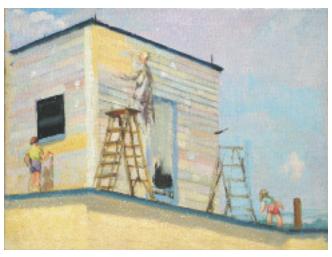


Gun Rock Beach
Oil on canvas
21^{1/2} x 25^{1/2} inches

Th-07



Vineyard House, oil on canvas, Th-261 16 x 20 inches



Painting the Hingham House, oil on canvas board, 9 x $12^{\text{Th-199}}$



Orying Yard Charcoal and watercolor on paper $14 \times 27^{1/2}$ inches





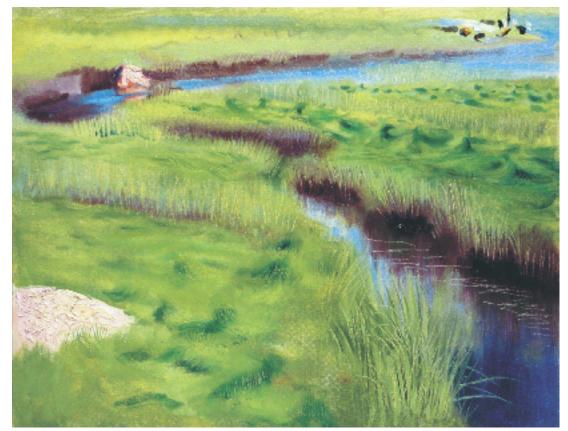
Soft Angles
Watercolor on paper
15^{1/2} x 11 inches



Polly Thayer Starr, ca. 1980

"We neglect at our cost the development of our power to see, to activate that 'third eye' we all have, that the East recognizes and that we in the West tend to ignore."

PTS, "On Seeing," in *Friends Journal*, Spetember 1/15, 1981



Duxbury
Oil on canvas board
14 x 18 inches



Wading, Low Tide, ca. 1960, oil on canvas board, 10 x 14 inches



Wandering the Sand Flats, Provincetown, ca. 1960, oil on board, 12 x 16 inches



The Fish, ca. 1985 Graphite on paper 21 x 11 inches

Th-97



Polly, ca. 1985

"I find there are secrets, certain noumenous things, that seem to speak to me in a special sense, signaling in a language that compels decoding. To be faithful to this task demands absolute attention."

PTS, "Why I Paint," unpublished ms., undated. Photo by David L. Ryan



*Iris*Pastel and watercolor on paper 24 x 18 inches



Th-213

Gladiola Mystery
Graphite on paper
29 x 23 inches



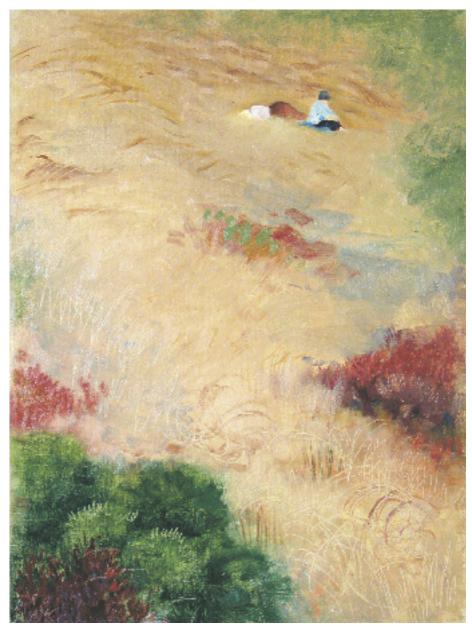
Single Floret Gladiola, ca. 1980 Graphite on paperp 17 x 14 inches



Polly with Benny, 1999

"You never achieve what you want, but you're always getting nearer to the essence. And that's a search that is all-important. ... To the extent that I have been able to enter into the secret of things, and to convey something of this experience to others through my art, I am deeply grateful."

PTS to Robert Brown, Feb. 1, 1996



Resting, West Chop, ca. 1970 Oil on canvas board 16 x 12 inches

Th-228

Centennial Exhibition Polly Thayer (Starr)

A Celebration of the Artist's 100th Birthday November 2 to December 31, 2004

Compiled by Nancy Allyn Jarzombek with an essay by Dorothy Koval Catalogue designed by Claudia G. Arnoff

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