

THE ARTISTIC CIRCLE OF HENRY C. WHITE

Henry C. White, whose pastels are the subject of the *Visions of Mood* exhibition in the adjacent galleries, felt strong affinities with the Tonalists—artists who embraced subdued color and poetic sentiment in their landscapes. At the same time, his circle included several American Impressionists. This selection of paintings by White and by those artists he revered and befriended provides a context for understanding his pastels in light of both Tonalism and Impressionism. Although sometimes thought to have been at odds, these two movements exhibit surprising points of intersection in the work of White and his contemporaries.

The most dominant figure in White's aesthetic life was his teacher, mentor, and friend Dwight Tryon, of whom he wrote a definitive biography in 1930. They shared a deep commitment to beauty and both conceived of nature in emotional terms, crafting ethereal landscapes in soothing tones like those evident in Tryon's *Evening, Autumn* and White's *Springtime*. Also in this gallery are examples of Tryon's work in pastel, a medium that he and White took up together. Although not represented here by any of his own dreamy depictions of women, the Tonalist Thomas Wilmer Dewing, a friend of both Tryon and White, proved significant to White's engagements—albeit limited—with the human figure.

Much of White's creative life revolved around his native Hartford, where his efforts to foster the arts brought him into contact with the painters Allen B. Talcott and Walter Griffin. All three admired Barbizon School landscapes but gradually adopted the brighter palette of the Impressionists, a transition evident in the paintings and sketches in this gallery. Talcott introduced White to the colony at Florence Griswold's boardinghouse in Old Lyme, where they were joined by Griffin and Edward Rook as members of a flourishing community of American Impressionists. The painter Nelson C. White, Henry White's son, grew up in his father's circle, and carried on his artistic principles into the next generation.