

EXHIBITION

Homegrown: The School of the Art Institute in the Permanent Collection

Oct 17, 2015–Feb 14, 2016



 Galleries 124-127

Closed

The School of the Art Institute (SAIC) and the Art Institute of Chicago museum have long shared a symbiotic relationship—one institution training artists and the other establishing an encyclopedic collection of works of art for artists and the public alike to study and enjoy. Since the Art Institute's earliest days, students have enjoyed spending class time in the galleries and have found inspiration in the museum's collection. Today, the museum is fortunate to count a great deal of works by SAIC alumni among its holdings.

To celebrate the long association between the museum and the school, Homegrown features approximately 120 objects, primarily works on paper, from the Art Institute's collection made by artists who attended SAIC. Beginning with the early 20th century and organized by decade, the display presents works by some of the most illustrious SAIC-educated artists while also prominently featuring pieces by those whose tenure at the school has at times been overlooked. Highlights include 20 iconic self-portraits by Ivan Albright (1897–1983), created at the end his career using a variety of drawing and painting media, and a selection of color woodblock prints by Gustave Baumann (1881–1971), a Santa Fe-based artist, designer, and letterpress printer who studied at SAIC as a teenager. Also included are the sketchbooks of Margo Hoff and LeRoy Neiman; Neiman's drawings of Chicago's Oak Street Beach, in particular, showcase the glitterati of a period typified by Hugh Hefner's founding of Playboy in the city in 1953. Pieces by the so-called Monster Roster artists who matured in the late-1940s and early 1950s—including Cosmo Campoli, Leon Golub, and Nancy Spero—and Imagist and Hairy Who artists such as Gladys Nilsson, Suellen Rocca, Sarah Canright, and Christina Ramberg, along with a variety of more recent works, round out the selections. Nilsson's Big School Picture; Little Paper Mural, commissioned by SAIC to be used as a poster advertising the school, serves as a particularly witty, beautiful example of the artist's work in its maturity.

That the school has produced such a range and wealth of talented artists over the years and that the museum has been able to acquire so much of this work to share are truly causes for celebration. The Art Institute of Chicago invites you to experience and explore the best of Chicago's very own—works by artists “homegrown” here on Michigan Avenue.

