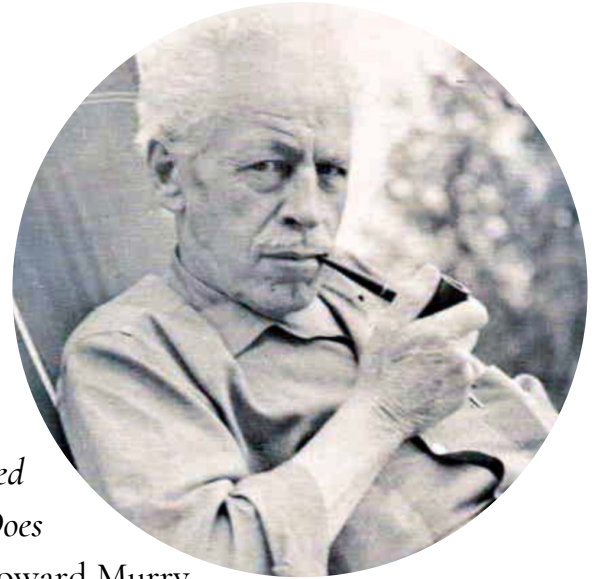


the Art Cellar

Howard Murry

1891-1968

“Very often people who come to see my paintings will say to me—“I don’t know anything about art, but...” They feel, but they are afraid to put trust in their own instinctive feelings. It is true that there are many things that go into the making of a piece of art and the artist may spend many painful years mastering them; but I do not think that the average layman need much concern himself about them. The test is Do You Like it? Does it suggest something other than mere surface appearance?” —Howard Murry



The mountains of Western North Carolina have carved out a tightly knit yet very welcoming culture of creative arts through the centuries that cannot be replicated. Murry made this area, specifically Valle Crucis, home in 1948 and painted in and around the area from the 1930's until he passed in 1968. During his lifetime, Murry won many recognition's and showed his work mostly within the North Carolina, South Carolina, and Washington D.C. areas.

Through his work, Murry identifies with his peers and honors everyday scenes of toil, labor, disaster, joy, and hope that described the agricultural area that the residents of the time grew up with. During Murry's time, “an anti modernist style and reaction against the modern European style, American Scene Painting, was seen as an attempt to define a uniquely American style of art”(art history archive) as a result of war and technological innovation.

His aim was to identify and make accurate and nostalgic records of the his mountainous home as well as the lives of its denizens of the time. As a result, the people of Murry's time and modern day residents clearly and vividly recognize many places and structures that make up their very own surroundings such as St. John's Episcopal Church and historic family houses. The tumultuous time period in which Murry lived is reflected in his work: two world wars, a great depression, and a sudden change in technological advances, lends itself to be a precious record of a pivotal time in American History that cannot be ignored.