

the art of the scene

Charles Truett Williams

Katie Robinson Edwards

Jonathan Frembling

S. Janelle Montgomery

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Foreword

Jonathan Frembling

It is always a joy when doing research to find connections between seemingly unrelated elements. This is often that “aha!” moment for historians. History is not limited to the stories of kings and nations; it also includes the small details that make moments a living thing. It is often these small, seemingly trivial details, especially as they build up, that create the richest stories.

Take for example the Carter family, best known in Fort Worth for their role as civic boosters. Amon G. Carter Sr. became known in the national media as “Mr. Fort Worth” for his tireless promotion of the city and creation of its Cultural District. Similarly, his daughter Ruth Carter Stevenson became nationally known for her role in the arts, building the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in honor of her father and later serving as the president of the National Gallery of Art. Conversely, Amon Carter Jr., son and brother respectively, was best known as a businessman. Finding a link during this project between him and Charles Truett Williams—the subject of this publication—was a genuine delight that adds a further chapter to the Carters as arts patrons (fig. 1.1).

Since its founding in 1961, the Carter has become a leader in art scholarship through its rigorous research program, publications, and initiatives such as the Gentling Study Center, which was founded in 2019 to mine the art and archival riches of the Museum’s collection for the unknown, the unexpected, and the innovative. Charles T. Williams is an ideal case study for this initiative. He was an inventive artist, working at a pivotal moment in art history, and a man with a unique talent for drawing in other talented artists and enhancing their work. This publication is the result of scholars’ delving into our archives to find this story outside the well-trod narrative of American art history.

This publication would not exist without two key figures: Shirley Reece-Hughes and Karl Williams. It began with Reece-Hughes, curator of paintings, sculpture, and works on paper at the Carter, and her decades-spanning engagement with the art and artists of Texas—such as the Fort Worth Circle and the Dallas Nine. Her publications and exhibitions laid the groundwork that led to Williams, and it was her introduction to Karl, son of the artist, in 2018 that initiated this project. Karl Williams has been a tireless promoter of his father’s legacy. An artist in his own

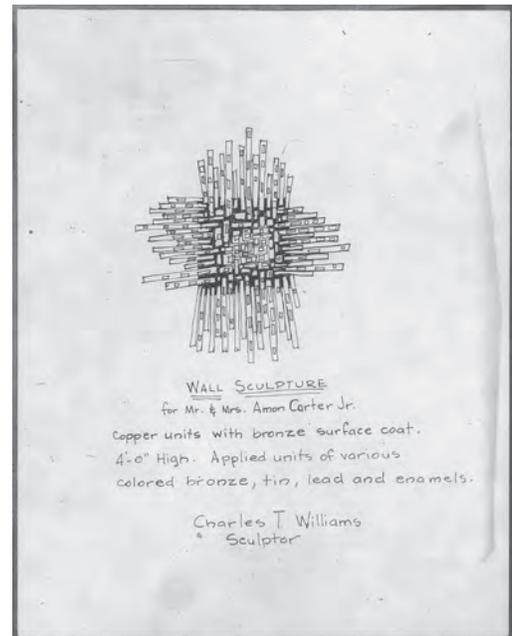


Fig. 1.1 Charles T. Williams, [*Sketch of Wall Sculpture*], n.d., graphite on paper, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. © Karl B. Williams.

right, widowed husband of a gifted sculptor, and studio assistant to his father from boyhood, he is immersed in the viscera of art making. It is his deep commitment and passion for the subject that led him to choose the Carter as the repository for his father's work through the gift of the Williams Papers, which served as the wellspring for the new scholarship found in this publication.

This study tapped the singular knowledge of Katie Robinson Edwards, executive director and curator at the UMLAUF Sculpture Garden and Museum in Austin. A leader in the study of Texas art, Edwards's previous publication on the subject is the standard against which this book will be measured. Her essay in this publication is amplified by that of S. Janelle Montgomery, Gentling Fellow at the Carter, whose trailblazing research led not only to a groundbreaking essay on the artist but to a comprehensive chronology of his life and of the art scene he moved in.

The refinement of this publication is the result of the often-unrecognized work of many hands. Will Gillham, editor and publisher at the Carter, shepherded the manuscript from inception to completion, ensuring wayward essayists, suspect prose, and artistic ambitions came together to make something worthy of the subject. Michelle Padilla, digital content strategist at the Museum, was instrumental in the identification of the platform and design of this publication. Selena Capraro, associate registrar, spent many hours pursuing the requisite permissions to make all the images and figures in the publication available, and Paul Leicht and Steve Watson, photographers at the Carter, captured images of Williams's dispersed works and prepared the image files for the book. Without their collective work there would be no art in an art book. My sincere thanks to Scott Grant Barker, a ready font of expertise on the arts in Texas, who peer-reviewed the essays. Finally, I thank Greg Albers and Erin Cecele Dunigan at the Getty Research Institute, who provided support for the Getty's Quire platform through which this publication is presented, and Stephanie Alger at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, who happily offered advice as someone who had gone before us in working with the platform.

This publication, then, is the study of a gifted artist that would not exist without the generous gift of his son and gifted circle of scholars and professionals. Each has brought, through their dedication and labor, something that is a credit to themselves and a service to the future. I extend my profound gratitude and respect to them all.

Jonathan Frembling

Gentling Curator and Head of Archives



A Moment of Time Caught in Grooves and Dimensions

Jonathan Frembling

An artist's archive is a time capsule or snapshot of a life's multidimensional legacy, like the sole surviving photograph from an obscure happening that makes a single moment the permanent and definitive version of the event. The archive, then, serves as a repository to gather into one place the many items that make up a life's snapshot, forming the fodder upon which the scholarship of that life is built—especially when all the contemporaneous actors in the events are gone. The archive reveals or obfuscates by turns, being the sum only of what has survived, and such “survivors” are prime examples of time's uncertainty; no matter how carefully the archival items are gathered, what survives and what does not is often determined by chance. Chance shapes the narrative as much as who is telling the story.

While artists may diligently save important mementos of their lives, these carefully curated moments, gathered for posterity, in the end may not be of interest to the researcher. Imagine, for example, the contents of the hope chest at the foot of a grandparent's bed that contains deeply personal items from life, which, once the person has passed and these associations are lost, lose all meaning. Rather than being held up as notable relics informing a notable life, they become part of antique shop displays of the faded and forlorn relics of countless, nameless lives. An archive also contains what is gathered after the artist is gone by well-intentioned third parties endeavoring to preserve anything that might illuminate the artist's life. Such surviving artifacts are often bundles of random mail left on a table, boxes of old receipts saved in case of an IRS audit, or leavings from the last projects that were intended to be finished at some point in a future that will not come. Whether by plan or happenstance, these items inevitably shape the scholar's narrative.

Such is the case with the Charles Truett Williams Papers in the archives of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art. The *raison d'être* of the essays that follow is to take these archival materials and build upon them, to study and organize them and then stitch them together into a



Fig. 2.1 Charles T. Williams, *[Untitled sculpture sketch]*, n.d., graphite on paper, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Sketches in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

story. This starts with the Museum’s mission to share the artists archives we have through exhibitions, fellowships, and publications, which together provide an opportunity to encounter these otherwise hidden collections and to gain introduction to these artists on their own terms and in their own words—not just through the art they make, but in what they write, what they chose to keep, and what fortune allowed to survive. This mandate is particularly important with an artist like Charles T. Williams (1918–1966), who was such a vigorous part of the art world of his day—especially in Fort Worth—whose career was tragically short, and for whom there is little extant scholarship (fig. 2.1).

The Williams Papers serve as a textbook example of the opportunities to create engaging scholarship, as well as the challenges of doing so. The papers only amount to about four and a half linear feet of material—five boxes. However, the descriptor “Papers” obfuscates the range of its contents. There are letters and manuscripts here, doodles and sketches, photos and artifacts from birth to after death. Such seemingly bland items, obscured behind archives jargon, do not reveal on their surface the depths of what can be discovered in their collective portrait of the artist—or conversely, the maddening questions they raise by what is missing.

The basic details of Williams’s personal life are found in the papers; there are the legalistic standards of birth and marriage certificates, diplomas and passports. His professional career can similarly be broadly sketched from the catalogues of exhibitions and newspaper clippings, all easy to find now online, though no researcher will complain that they were saved and are now preserved. But such items do not make good history or tell the fuller story.



Fig. 2.2 Charles T. Williams, *[Portrait of Karl Williams]*, ca. 1950, graphite on paper, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Clippings in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

Indeed, the papers have surprisingly little that capture Williams’s voice. There are few examples of his letters, leaving sizable portions of his life and words unrecoverable. We have almost nothing from his childhood and young adulthood before World War II. We learn he was born in rural Texas to a small, conventionally religious family of masons, that he served as a draftsman during the war but wrote very little about what he encountered in Europe. The letters that survive capture his deep affection for his young wife, Louise, and a single line about what he had witnessed of war upon encountering a freed POW: “(He) is trying to get used to life again. Just sits and stares into space, is awfully jumpy and nervous. Tells about people starving—eating grass and wood. About people getting killed—and he’s telling the truth.”¹

There are also gaping voids in the papers around Williams’s personal life following the war. Louise, the mother of his only child, died of pneumonia in 1947, but there is no record of what he felt and thought. Similarly, nothing from his courtship and marriage to his

second wife, Anita, appears in the papers.² He also kept very little pertaining to his relationship with his son, Karl (fig. 2.2).³ What does come into clear focus through a sheaf of letters—unlike anything else in the papers in quantity and duration—is evidence of an intense friendship struck up with Parisienne Lila Ménard during the war that would continue until Williams’s death.⁴ Beyond a handful of other letters from his kin asking him to join the family masonry business, the correspondence in the papers turns to purely professional matters.

Instead of joining his father and brother as masons, Williams opted for the Corps of Engineers, working on architectural embellishments in addition to his engineering work, which over time led him toward architecturally sculptural art and commissions.⁵ Even though he was not a writer by training, he could be eloquent, especially on matters of the arts and their importance to society.

“Sculpture and other forms of art have been removed from our daily lives and must be sought out in places set aside exclusively for their appreciation. With the result that instead of enriching the lives of many, art has become through inaccessibility, meaningless to all but a small portion of the population. This separation of the product of man’s artistic creation from the life of the community is a phenomenon which has not always existed in the past. The ancient Greek agora, an everyday meeting place of the people, was enhanced by sculpture, murals and mosaics. [In] the medieval marketplace, the focal point was the fountain, often a fine piece of sculpture.”⁶

Art was not only Williams’s chosen profession, it was the core of his being, so it follows that 80 percent of his papers are about his art, forming the clear bulk of the archive. These materials convey his nature—both through what is observable in the material and by its volume. There are beautifully engraved linoleum blocks for his creative and playful prints, as well as hundreds of sketches and photographs that provide an irreplaceable summation of his artistic technique and overall output (fig. 2.3). Within these sketches are examples of his process, his working through ideas in iterative tinkering with motifs and designs leading to final formalized sketches. Included in the photographs are snapshots of final works, a number of which remain unlocated or lost, making these images the only records of their existence. A trained engineer, Williams meticulously logged each of his compositions and, in many instances, who their buyers were along with sales price, providing an expansive accounting of this aspect of his career (fig. 2.4).



Fig. 2.3 Charles T. Williams, *Package Arrived! Merci Beaucoup*, n.d., linoleum block, 6 3/4 x 5 5/8 x 5/8 in., Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Linocut Blocks in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

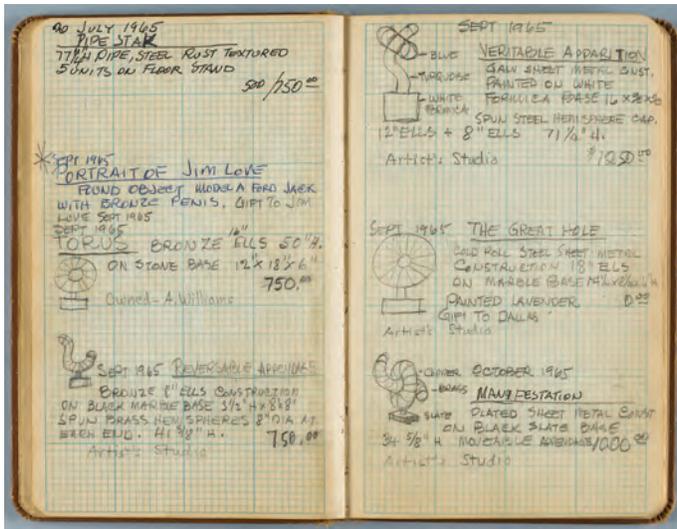


Fig. 2.4 Charles T. Williams, *Sculpture Log: Charles T. Williams*, Jan. 1, 1965 to March 31, 1966, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Ledgers in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

While this summation of his art making is vital, something important about the man would go missing without observing closely the blocks, sketches, photos, and sculptures that form his art. His work brought out a deep spirituality and innate passionate eloquence, hinting at his natural charisma and force of personality. His spirituality was at odds with the larger conservative outlook of midcentury Texas—he was an unashamed atheist but one who acknowledged the unique magic of making art, considering artists as something more akin to a shaman than a craftsman, even if this outlook at times cost him commissions to his peers and rivals, such as Charles Umlauf.⁷ It gave his art a delightful playfulness, especially as he progressed

from a journeyman learning technique to an accomplished artist. In his later work, there is a much greater emphasis on found-object compositions that tap into the mystery of chance leading an artist to inspiration—turning the everyday into art.

While art was fundamental to Williams’s character, that did not translate into serious art making. This is elegantly expressed within the archive and extends the motif of Williams as shaman or artistic spirit guide, which is made clear in the hundreds of photographs in the papers of parties mixing frivolity with artistic and intellectual mingling—an example being “The Game” played at these parties, wherein one artist began a composition and another finished.⁸ More happened here than partying; The Game was an expression of the French Existentialist viewpoint, championed by Williams, of living for today, forged during a life lived with intensity, leavening in ideas new to Texas that he gathered in his time in Europe during the war. This milieu is glimpsed in the photographs of artists gathered in his studio—Williams leading a collaborative artistic environment that created art and lived for the moment.⁹

The Charles Truett Williams Papers provide a singular opportunity to encounter a uniquely creative mind in a viscerally direct way through his own words, art, snapshots, and mementos. The archive reveals his studio as the new post-war gathering place for artists, succeeding the previous generation of artists in Fort Worth, and although his career lasted only about twenty years, and his life was cut short, he inspired and led a generation of artists that followed him and created artistic works of enduring beauty.

NOTES

1. Charles Truett Williams to Mrs. C. Williams, November 19, 1945, in Correspondence - General [1] folder, Charles Truett Williams Papers, Amon Carter Museum of American Art (hereinafter, "ACMAA Williams Papers").
2. Louise met Charles before the war while they both attended Hardin-Simmons University, and they married in 1941. Anita was his son Karl's grade-school teacher. They married in 1951. "Marriage License, Chas. T. Williams and Anita S. McConnell," August 31, 1951, in Legal and Financial Records, ACMAA Williams Papers.
3. Father and son had an often tumultuous relationship. Karl assisted in the studio before leaving for college, but like his father, he would pursue his own course. Karl Williams, conversation with the author, April 12, 2022. It is worth noting that the only portrait sketch in the papers is that of a young Karl.
4. Anita continued corresponding with Ménard for years after Charles's passing.
5. His body of work is explored in detail in Katie Robinson Edwards's essay, but a large portion of his works were designed as architectural elements—directly, such as fountain pieces and decorative additions to structures, or indirectly through appropriation in found object designs using building materials.
6. Charles T. Williams, "American Institute of Architects (AIA) Lecture" (unpublished manuscript, abridged), October 25, 1955, 1, in Clippings folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
7. Williams specifically called any artist a shaman as a way to express the nuance of an abstracted spirituality. He was raised in a Christian household but clearly did not feel the need for an anthropomorphized deity. He did not express overt disdain for others who held sincere convictions, however, and within the papers are examples of his linocut blocks that use Christian motifs and imagery for holidays. Both Karl Williams and Katie Robinson Edwards note the enmity between Umlauf and Williams, who actively detested each other both professionally and personally. Williams found Umlauf's extensive use of religious motifs pandering and unartistic. However, Umlauf received many more commissions because he read the pulse of his patrons. Karl Williams, conversation with the author, April 12, 2022.
8. Based on the surrealist "Exquisite Corpse" party game.
9. The dangerous side of this force of personality is demonstrated in a story of his stepson's getting in trouble with the police. After his son was roughly delivered to the Williams residence by the police, Charles sent him inside and, barehanded, threw the police officer off of his property. "He was incredibly strong from working in metal and stone, but his presence was what made you never want to cross him." Karl Williams, conversation with the author, April 12, 2022.



Charles T. Williams at Work and Play

Katie Robinson Edwards

Charles Truett Williams (1918–1966) was rare, even among successful artists, for possessing a single-minded, round-the-clock focus on art. Between February 1945 and June 1946, following the end of World War II, he served a tour of duty in Europe as a topographic draftsman for the Army Corps of Engineers.¹ For much of that tour, the twenty-eight-year-old native Texan was stationed in Paris (fig. 3.1). He had been making drawings and cartoons since childhood, and he continued to sketch and create linocut prints while on the transport ship and overseas (fig. 3.2).² Even when working full time, Williams was like an anthropological participant-observer placed in a foreign land: He watched, researched, and engaged as fully as possible. From the music, the people, the food, the art, and the mood of his surroundings, he absorbed everything with gusto and allowed it to feed his creativity. Whatever aesthetic inclinations Williams brought with him, Paris steeped him in the most current modern art, broadened his mind, and encouraged him to become a career artist.

Upon Williams's return to the United States in June 1946, he joined his wife, Louise, and their young son, Karl, at their home in Atlanta, Georgia. Tragically, Louise passed away a year later, prompting Williams to move to Fort Worth, Texas, near his parents. There he embarked on a deliberate and decisive path to make his living as a full-time artist. For the next eight years, Williams maintained his job with the Army Corps, raised his son, and completed college and graduate school, all while pursuing his passion of making art.³ Continuing to explore ideas he encountered and developed in Europe, he brought key aspects of both modernism and sociability to the Fort Worth region. Charlie's shop and Charlie's studio, as his Fort Worth art studios were known, became literal and figurative watering holes for artists from across the state and beyond.

In 1955 Williams finally quit his salaried job, spending the last decade of his life working full time as an artist. Years later, when



Fig. 3.1 [Charles T. Williams], *[Soldiers on a Paris sidewalk]*, ca. 1945, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.



Fig. 3.2 Unknown photographer, *[Charles T. Williams sketching in tent]*, ca. 1945, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

asked about his father, his son Karl described him as “an artist all of the time, absolutely all of the time. There was not a moment that that drive ever left him.”⁴ That drive, along with Williams’s affable character and what a contemporary curator once called his “own special brand of bathroom humor,” made him a central figure who energized the burgeoning Texas modern art scene.⁵

Williams’s vitality and aesthetic acumen permeated all aspects of his life, infusing a work ethic into his leisure time and a playful spirit into his work life. Play deeply affected his work: Playing games, punning and wordplay, and even play acting all contributed to the artist’s creative output, and similarities and symmetries abound between Williams’s good-natured games and his subsequent sculptures. Fun, humor, games, and sexual innuendo—the jocular liberation of stricture and boundary—occupied a central role in Williams’s art. When he died in Fort Worth at the age of forty-eight, Williams left behind a compelling array of modern sculptures and a legacy as one of Texas’s most creative and unique artists.

PARIS: 1945–46

It was work that took Charles T. Williams to Paris, but he found ample opportunities to play. Although Parisians were joyful after the war, four years of Nazi occupation left deep physical and psychological marks; the city and its inhabitants continued to suffer from shortages of housing, power, and food. Williams arrived in Paris in February 1945, six months after the liberation, as part of the postwar rebuilding project led by the US Army Corps of Engineers. Having shown interest in engineering as a student, Private Williams was assigned to the photomapping company attached to the 659th Topographic Mapping Battalion in the Seine Section Headquarters. After regaining territory, the Allies still faced significant obstacles moving into the Rhine region of Germany, including a lack of accurate maps.⁶ The topographic mapping effort converted aerial photos and other intelligence into functional maps for wayfinding on the ground. At work, Williams learned to make colored topographic maps of Bavaria, prepare multiplex manuscripts from aerial photographs, and ink five-color separation boards.⁷ He worked side by side with the French, teaching their engineers to do the same. His assignments required him to shift cognitively and physically between two- and three-dimensional spaces. Consciously or not, he acquired crucial pedagogical and technical skills as a result of the rigorous Army Corps training.

We have only the barest of glimpses into Williams’s time in Europe, gleaned from photos, one-sided letters, and recollections housed in the Charles Truett Williams Papers at the Amon Carter Museum of American Art. What we see is a man in a foreign land recovering from war, a man obsessed with art and attentive to the aesthetic revolutions of the time, and a man who, throughout all of it, never forgot how to enjoy himself. Like thousands of other American GIs in Paris, Williams took advantage of the locale, traversing the city and countryside to experience many of the world’s greatest cultural and historical monuments and museums. He also found opportunities to meet artists and see paintings and sculptures in person that he had previously only encountered in books and magazines.⁸ Americans were welcomed as heroes when they helped to liberate Paris in August 1944,



Fig. 3.3 Robert Capa (1913–1954), [*US soldiers looking at Pablo Picasso's paintings in his studio on the rue Grands Augustins, Paris*], 1944, gelatin silver print, 7 7/8 x 9 5/8 in., International Center of Photography, the Robert Capa and Cornell Capa Archive, Gift of Cornell and Edith Capa, 2020, 2010.92.7. © Robert Capa/Magnum Photos, © International Center of Photography, © 2022 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Braque, remained in their homes and studios for the duration of the war. The Germans allowed Pablo Picasso to stay in his Paris studio throughout the occupation, although the Gestapo periodically paid him visits.⁹ Like many modern European artists, Picasso was labeled a “degenerate” by the Third Reich, but in the 1940s he was also the world’s most famous living artist.¹⁰ Although there is no indication that Williams ever met Picasso, the celebrated artist’s address at 7 Rue des Grands-Augustins was common knowledge among American GIs.¹¹ They dropped in regularly on the Spanish artist, bearing gifts of war rations as Picasso patiently let them wander through his studio (fig. 3.3).¹² Germain Viatte, art historian in post-war France and former Pompidou Center Director, noted that, with the war over, “Paris became once more the mecca for artists from all over the world. They arrived to find the heritage of modern art miraculously alive.”¹³ That heritage included not only historical architecture and artworks but also numerous galleries, museums, and salons that exhibited twentieth-century European modernism.

Williams’s art from this period reflects the influence of European artists. Between his full-time Army Corps duties, travels, and socializing, Williams somehow made time to carve and print linoleum blocks. One black-and-white linocut from around 1945 bears a remarkable resemblance to the latest styles in Paris and appears to pay homage to two influential Europeans: author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry and artist Joan Miró. The night scene depicts two simple figures—a large, single-footed creature in the foreground and a man wearing a hat, or possibly a crown—both standing on the curved edge of a planet (fig. 3.4). The curve recalls the illustrations in Saint-Exupéry’s 1943 novella *The Little Prince*. A pilot during the war and national hero, Saint-Exupéry was nevertheless a controversial figure in France. His work had been banned by both the collaborationist Vichy Regime and the French Resistance

and Williams benefited from continued goodwill toward the United States. His tour of duty left an indelible impression, solidifying his resolve and shaping his vision of art and his notion of what an artist was.

The rise of the Third Reich and the expanding war had driven many artists from Europe, where cities and the countryside were brutally ravaged or completely leveled. Even so, after the German air force bombed Paris in 1940 and killed hundreds of civilians, the Nazis left much of the city intact during their four-year occupation, even as they looted thousands of cultural artifacts. Some prominent artists who fled, like Marc Chagall, André Derain, Raoul Dufy, Alberto Giacometti, and Henri Matisse, returned after Paris was liberated.

Others, like Constantin Brâncuși and Georges



Fig. 3.4 Charles T. Williams, *The Departure*, ca. 1945, linocut print, 5 7/8 x 3 3/4 in., Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Prints in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

original colored pochoir prints by Miró. Although neither Miró nor Williams were official members of the surrealist movement, both drew considerable inspiration from its emphasis on “automatic” drawing to access the unconscious mind and the movement’s privileging of elemental shapes and objects.¹⁵ An earlier, better known Miró painting, *Person Throwing a Stone at a Bird* (1924), seems to be another clear source for Williams’s Paris linocut (fig. 3.6). *Person* features a simplified surrealist figure characterized by its oversized single foot, set within a bold green and yellow landscape. It is also reminiscent of the cartoon-style, three-dimensional limbs of a pink ceramic figure Williams made after he returned to the United States (fig. 3.7). Whether or not the Texan was familiar with Miró’s work prior to being drafted, in Paris he was impressed enough to emulate the Spanish artist. Williams carried several copies of his linocut back to the United States at the end of his tour.

Movement. His mysterious vanishing on a routine reconnaissance flight mission made global headlines in 1944. Though *The Little Prince* was published in the United States in 1943, it was not published in France until after liberation in 1945, the same year that Williams arrived in Paris. While the evidence for a direct inspiration is only circumstantial, Williams was tuned in to the French political world as well as the art world; for example, in 1962, he created *Portrait of Charles Degaul* (misspelled in Williams’s art logbook), a caricature of French general-turned-president Charles de Gaulle, made with a cast iron bathtub leg.¹⁴

While the setting of Williams’s linocut may take after *The Little Prince*, the composition visually echoes two works by Catalanian artist Joan Miró. Miró’s 1934 pochoir (or stenciled) print *Surrealist Composition II* consists of a solid black sky and blue landscape with two elongated, abstracted figures (fig. 3.5). The 1934 edition of the French journal *Cahiers d’Art*, where Williams may have seen *Surrealist Composition II*, published in Paris by art critic and collector

Christian Zervos, included large-size



Fig. 3.5 Joan Miro (1893–1983), *Cahiers d’art II (Surrealist Composition II)*, 1934, color pochoir, 12 3/8 x 9 1/2 in., University of North Dakota Art Collection, purchased with funds from the Myers Foundations. © Successió Miró / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris 2022.



Fig. 3.6 Joan Miró (1893–1983), *Person Throwing a Stone at a Bird*, 1926, oil on canvas, 29 x 36 1/4 in., The Museum of Modern Art, purchase, 271.1937. © Successió Miró / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris 2022. Digital image © The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by Art Resource, NY.



Fig. 3.7 Charles T. Williams, [*Seated figure*], ca. 1955, ceramic, 5 x 4 3/8 x 6 3/4 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Karl B. Williams

Like Williams, American GIs arriving in mid-1940s Europe encountered art and artists they likely learned about only through magazines and newspapers. Europe was only beginning to recover from the war's devastation, and the exodus of artists had initiated the art world's shift to New York City. Still, from 1945 and for several years after, again according to Germain Viatte, "Paris was the only major capital cosmopolitan and receptive enough to become the focus and the promoter of new ideas."¹⁶

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act, nicknamed the GI Bill, ensured the US government would fund classes for soldiers who had served at least three months in the armed forces.¹⁷ For example, over a hundred American servicemen-artists enrolled in regular lessons at the studio of Picasso's colleague, the French painter and

sculptor Fernand Léger.¹⁸ It is important to note that generally speaking, American GIs, many of whom were young and came from small towns or rural regions, might not have had the sophistication or awareness to know that Paris was in the process of losing its title of art world capital. In short, it didn't matter much to them: the City of Light may have been dimmed, but to Americans it was a spectacular, culturally rich metropolis. Themes of revolution, thwarting the system, and rebelling against academicism ran deep in the local psyche, and Paris retained its well-earned, if waning, reputation as the center of European modern art.

In fact modern art itself was born in Paris. One can even pinpoint a particular year: 1863, when French painter Édouard Manet displayed his scandalous painting *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* at

the Salon des Refusés, the exhibition of artworks rejected from the official French Salon. Manet depicted two fashionably dressed men sharing a picnic on the grass with a nude woman who confronts the viewer with her brown eyes and starkly painted pale face. Exhibition visitors recognized the naked woman as a prostitute and the illicit scene as taking place on the outskirts of Paris in the fashionable Bois de Boulogne area.¹⁹ With *Le Déjeuner*, Manet marked the beginning of a long series of challenges to the status quo and of intentional transgressions by artists of aesthetic and cultural boundaries. During the following decade, Claude Monet and a group of artists painted outdoors, translating the effects of changing light into color, placing quickly rendered brushstrokes onto their canvases and forever altering the concept of what a finished painting could look like. Scathingly dubbed "Impressionism" by a critic who visited their 1874 exhibition, a new art movement was born.



Fig. 3.8 Pablo Picasso (1881–1973), *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J.)*, 1907, oil on canvas, 96 x 92 in., The Museum of Modern Art, acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest, 333.1939. © 2022 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Digital image © The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY.

In 1907, Picasso turned tradition and decorum on its head once again when he finished his grand eight-by-eight-foot canvas *Les Femmes d'Alger*, a depiction of five nude female figures in a Barcelona brothel (fig. 3.8). By intentionally rivaling the monumental scale of traditional French academic paintings, Picasso made it impossible to ignore his decidedly confrontational figures. Flattening the planes of the women's angular bodies and reinterpreting their volume through deliberately visible shade marks, Picasso embarked on the road to cubism. Notably, he also painted two of the women wearing what appear to be African tribal masks.²⁰ Historians believe this gesture reflected his visits to the artifacts in the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro, later known as the Musée de l'Homme.²¹ Dedicated to the study of ethnography and anthropology, the Trocadéro's collection of tribal objects and so-called "primitive" art influenced Picasso and many other early twentieth-century cubist and fauve artists.²²

As a result of European colonization in the African continent and throughout Oceania during the early twentieth century, art from these cultures flooded Paris markets and galleries, ripped out of their original contexts. Picasso was not alone; the imagery and iconography of Oceania, Iberia, Mesoamerica, and Africa was repeatedly borrowed by artists, Williams included. Through appropriation, artists challenged European social norms and standards of "high art" while they simultaneously reinforced negative colonial stereotypes about non-European peoples. Many European and American artists genuinely resonated with the power conveyed in tribal objects, as Picasso claimed to have done, but artists also sought to utilize the subversive potential and shock value of objects that upset Western standards. These appropriations decisively changed the course of modern art. However much Picasso may have known about Africa and Oceania, he sensed that the objects he saw had little to do with aesthetics (a distinctively European invention) and instead served a "sacred, magical purpose."²³ Recognizing the significance of Picasso's proto-cubist accomplishment, in 1939 New York's Museum of Modern Art purchased *Les Femmes d'Alger*. The painting, complete with its African and Iberian influences and tawdry setting, became a touchstone for contemporary artists and by 1946 was firmly ensconced within the modern art canon.²⁴

Although Williams could not have seen *Les Femmes d'Alger* in France, examples of non-European art would have been discoverable throughout Paris. It is likely that the young Texan's perambulations, coupled with his



Fig. 3.9 Charles T. Williams, *Ubangi Woman*, 1961, assembled found objects, 22 1/4 x 8 1/2 x 8 1/2 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Karl B. Williams. Photograph by Robert LaPrelle.

interest in the artistic legacies of the city, led him to explore non-western art in Paris, perhaps even carrying him to the Musée de l'Homme. (His Parisian girlfriend, Lilà, discussed at length below, also happened to live nearby.)²⁵ According to the artist and writer Tom Motley, Williams “was intrigued with tribal ritual masks of Polynesia, in particular with the emphatic sense of character illustrated in those of New Guinea.”²⁶ Black-and-white photographs from the Williams archive that date to his time show that he owned an Oceanic or African-style mask and two other non-Western sculptures.²⁷ The origins of these objects, and whether they are authentic artifacts or replicas, is unknown.²⁸ But they were important enough to Williams that he kept them his entire life, nicknaming the male mask “Joe” and the female figure “Rosie.” Indeed, these experiences and collections must have left quite an impression on Williams: Fifteen years after returning to the United States, he welded together the African-inspired *Ubangi Woman* from scrap salvaged from Gachman Metals in Fort Worth (fig. 3.9).²⁹

Gregarious and hungry for life, Williams absorbed Parisian culture like a sponge. The artist’s 1946 datebook contains only abbreviated references to various activities and locales, providing an incomplete but nonetheless rich picture of his exploits in Paris. He writes of going to horse races at the Longchamp Hippodrome in the Bois de Boulogne; another time he watches the races at the Saint-Cloud Hippodrome.³⁰ He makes notes of various dinners (“had chow at Monde/l”) and outings, sometimes geographically far from where he was stationed. He toured historical sites: Three times during February 1946 he visited the ancient Roman road that became the Rue du Faubourg-Montmartre.³¹ Some agenda entries allude to gaming activities (a “Ping Pong Bar”) or pure entertainment (a “movie”).³² He also partook of highbrow art forms. At least twice he patronized the Paris Opera at the famed Palais Garnier. He adored the ballet, attending in October and November 1945, and then at least three times in March 1946. In a letter to his wife back home he wrote:

“Ballet to me is the height of emotional expression. I love it. Wish I could see one every day. Think I’ll go back and see this one again. It’s an English troupe and damned good if they are a little conservative. I love you.”³³

Louise’s responses to her husband’s letters have not survived, but Williams seems at ease sharing with her, apparently confident of her positive response. (Other deployed servicemen might have shied away from telling their wives how much they loved ballet.) Although the biographical record on Louise Williams is scant, she was



Fig. 3.10 [Charles T. Williams], [*Cast iron tree grate with pigeon, Paris*], ca. 1945, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.



Fig. 3.11 Unknown photographer, [*Paris street scene, inscribed "Me in typical French latrine"*], August 1945, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

June 6.³⁷ On the verso Williams noted, “Me in typical French latrine Paris France Aug ’45.” The juxtaposition of the Texan relieving himself next to a symbol of German atrocities is revealing: While it indicates Williams’s ability to use scatological humor to create levity in challenging times, it also symbolizes the plight of thousands of young American soldiers who were deployed across Europe impossibly ill-equipped to handle the tragedy of the Holocaust and the war.

Something else Williams had in common with many American soldiers overseas was that, despite having a wife and son in the United States, he passed the time with a European girlfriend.³⁸ Whether out of fear that they might

no stranger to theater, having written, produced, and directed her own radio show in Atlanta, the *Louise Williams Drama Hour*.³⁴ After Charles’s discharge, it is unknown whether he and Louise ever went to a ballet during their brief reunion in Atlanta. Once he moved to Fort Worth, however, Williams befriended artists of the Fort Worth Circle, who shared his passion for ballet, even performing their own dances and gifting one another ballet slippers at Christmastime.³⁵

Photographs in the Williams archive show that while in France he traveled to landmarks including the Arc de Triomphe, the Dôme des Invalides, the Louvre, Notre Dame de Paris, the Palais de Justice de Paris, Place Vendôme, the Tombeau du Maréchal Foch, and Versailles, as well as unrecognizable sites of bombed-out architecture.³⁶ He snapped pictures of Parisian markets, American soldiers, and German guards. These photos often display a sly, slightly bawdy sense of humor as well as a keen attention to detail. On one of his walks through the city he photographed a pigeon standing on the edge of a circular cast iron tree grate after a rain (**fig. 3.10**). One can imagine how the engineer in Williams admired the industrial design of the protective grate and the way it allowed water to reach the tree, or perhaps how he saw the pigeon as peaceful, comical, or all of the above. On the back of a snapshot of a young French woman in a dress riding a bicycle, Williams wrote, “Mademoselle [*sic*] on Champs Elysees / the skirts didn’t blow as per usual.” In still another photograph, this one by someone else, Williams stands in a public urinal plastered with broadsides, looking back at the camera (**fig. 3.11**). In an ominous reminder of the times, a poster on the latrine wall announces, “Un Document sensationnelle: Le Carnet de Notes d’Hermann Goering,” opening

never return home or as a result of being caught up in the romance of Europe, soldiers routinely engaged in sexual relations with locals. In fact, such dalliances may have been inadvertently encouraged by the paternalistic military culture. Historian Mary Louise Roberts maintains:

“[World War II] was a particularly eroticized war. Anybody who remembers the pinups on airplanes, Rita Hayworth, the amount to which pinups became a part of the culture of the GIs, will recognize to what extent sex became important to the war experience. . . . Photojournalism in particular was used to portray the Frenchwoman as ready to be rescued, ready to greet the American soldier, and ready to congratulate and thank him through a kiss or even more.”³⁹

The subject of servicemen’s intimate relations seems unwholesome, standing in contrast with our received notions of American heroism in World War II.

Unlike some of his fellow soldiers, Williams seems to have had sustained relations with only one woman, Gisèle Ménard, also known as Mrs. Lílá Lippens. There is no indication of how they first met or whether Williams’s wife Louise knew about Lílá. What evidence we have of their amorous relationship is gleaned from letters Lílá wrote him after he left Paris, many of which are preserved in the Williams archive. (Regrettably, we only have Lílá’s letters that Williams saved but no letters Williams sent to her.) Her dispatches arrived regularly for months in 1947 and intermittently thereafter: They indicate that he mailed her numerous letters and parcels, though evidently not frequently enough for Lílá to be satisfied. For example, in a 1948 letter she wrote, “I’m developing a turned down nose, a turned down mouth, and a suspicious belligerent eye. The disappointment of having no mail from Fort Worth give [*sic*] me a MEAN look, a kind of death ray look looking for you.”⁴⁰

An entrepreneur and great appreciator of the arts, Lílá came from a wealthy family, spoke at least three languages, and traveled regularly throughout Europe and India, eventually establishing a successful import business. She occasionally made self-conscious fun of her limitations when writing in English, yet her judicious use of English words is at moments utterly disarming. We can surmise that Williams was charmed by her accented English and careful diction. (He valued verbal puns and whimsical titles and maintained a running list of potential artwork titles, both serious and comical, at the back of his sculpture log.) At one point in their correspondence, Williams must have inquired as to whether Lílá was “still single.” Her answer came, unequivocal and shrewd: “OF COURSE, I’m single, and not like you ‘so to speak.’ I’m single, period.”⁴¹

However one views their romantic affair, Lílá was unquestionably one of the artist’s greatest supporters and champions of his art making. Her correspondence reflects intense interactions about art, books, people, and love that they shared during their time together. One letter included a photo that Charlie (as she calls him) must have mailed her, of him with their mutual friend “Mac” at Harry’s New York Bar in Paris. (Perhaps “Mac” was the nickname for the establishment’s owner, Harry MacElhone, discussed later in this essay.) Elsewhere she thanks Williams for a package that contained coffee and powdered milk—Borden’s brand—two staples Lílá was unable to

obtain in postwar Paris. At another point, she mailed him a box of Edith Piaf records that we know he played on the turntable in his Fort Worth studio. Early in 1947 Williams must have sent her a ceramic sculpture that he made and fired in Atlanta. She responded, “My love, listen closely, I got big plans for your ceramics.”⁴² Later, in February 1948, she wrote of having received a box that included colored ceramic buttons and being “most excited to wear ‘your’ buttons.”⁴³ She asked Charlie to “Tell me more about your future shop” and enthusiastically praised his work after he began to exhibit publicly in Fort Worth, writing at one point, “Figures in plaster at Fort Worth exhibition!”⁴⁴ Perhaps prophetically and in a sly elision of sculpture and sensuality, in 1947 she wrote to Williams: “I got to think of your hands—you got the right hands for sculpture—ceramic is one thing. Sculpture is another. Why don’t you try to keep on with both—I wish you try doing my head, for instance.”⁴⁵

For several years, both seemed to think that one day they could reunite: She mentioned marriage, repeatedly invited him to live with her, and indicated she would inherit a great sum of money once her father passed away. Although we do not have Williams’s responses, a few months after Louise’s death, he applied for US Government employment requesting an assignment (likely it would have been another transfer within the Army Corps of Engineers) in Austria or Germany.⁴⁶ As the years passed, they remained friends even after each of them remarried different people.⁴⁷ Nearly twenty years after their war-time affair, in 1963 Williams and his then-wife Anita visited Lílá in Europe. And in 1966, in an indication of the former lovers’ cultural and class differences, Lílá mailed the Williams family an elegantly typeset card announcing her divorce.⁴⁸ Sadly, it seems to have been the last piece of correspondence he ever received from her.



Fig. 3.12 Unknown photographer, [*Harry MacElhone and Charles T. Williams outside Harry’s New York Bar, Paris*], ca. 1945, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

In Paris, one of the venues Williams and Lílá frequented together was the aforementioned Harry’s New York Bar, the renowned expatriate hangout located near the Opera and the Place Vendôme at 5 Rue Daunou. Williams quickly found Harry’s to be a home away from home. Everything about the bar would have suited the Texan’s tastes: the buoyant atmosphere enhanced by cigarettes and alcohol, the constant flow of American expatriate, French, and foreign travelers, the women displaying current Parisian fashion, the opportunity to discuss every kind of cultural and political event, the prime location in a key cultural district of Paris, and the respite it provided from the anxiety brought on by trying to reconstruct entire nations after the war.

Harry’s Bar represented a literal piece of Americana in Paris: The establishment was named for the carved mahogany bar that Harry’s original owner shipped across the Atlantic from New York’s Seventh Avenue pub district around 1910 and then reassembled in Paris.⁴⁹ Among the bar’s most famous denizens were actors

Humphrey Bogart and Rita Hayworth; authors F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and Sinclair Lewis; and football legend Knute Rockne. A regular, Williams went alone, with his army buddies or other acquaintances, or with Lílá. He became good friends with the bar's namesake, Scotsman Harry MacElhone, exchanging photographs and Christmas cards even after Williams returned to the States (fig. 3.12).⁵⁰ Sometimes they carried on their socializing away from Harry's Bar: One Saturday in May 1945, Williams, Harry, and Lílá had a night out in the bohemian Montparnasse neighborhood.⁵¹ The engaging Williams would have struck up conversations with numerous customers, sharpening his conversational skills while learning about wide-ranging aspects of life abroad. He met all kinds of people, including businessmen in postwar Paris who were taking advantage of newly reopened European markets, like the American Ray Rivington Powers, who headed the Coca-Cola Company for the entire continent. As Williams reported in a letter home to Louise in Atlanta, he found Powers to be "a nice drunken character."⁵²

Williams also met the American author Henry Miller at Harry's Bar and at some point acquired a signed copy of *Tropic of Cancer*, Miller's quasi-autobiographical novel filled with candid accounts of sexual exploits drawn from his expatriate life in Paris. Published in 1934 by the English-language Parisian imprint Obelisk Press, both *Tropic of Cancer* and its prequel, *Tropic of Capricorn* (published 1939), drew charges of pornography and were banned in the United States.⁵³ Although Williams was friendly and open to new ideas, he hailed from a conservative, rural Texas background. Having broken sexual mores and boundaries himself, one can only imagine how Miller's novels and meeting the author in person affected Williams at that crucial point in his life. The two men maintained a friendship after their returns to the United States, with Williams visiting Miller on a trip to California in the late 1950s.⁵⁴

Years later, sculptor Gene Owens, who became one of Williams's closest friends, recalled how Williams enjoyed showing off his collection of mimeographed booklets that Miller allegedly traded for drinks at Harry's Bar.⁵⁵ Owens laughingly remembered another of the artist's oft-told stories: Williams evidently spent so much time at the bar that the managers gifted him a lapel pin of a fly made of solid gold and colored enamel. Indeed, among the Williams papers are documents referencing the "Order of the Barflies" at Harry's.⁵⁶ Owens said Williams was fond of telling people it was the only medal he received during the war.⁵⁷ Harry's New York Bar possessed a lively and creatively charged postwar *joie de vivre* that was not lost on Williams.

FROM ATLANTA TO FORT WORTH

In June 1946, after crossing the Atlantic on the USNS *Aiken Victory* transport ship, Williams reunited with his family in Atlanta, Georgia.⁵⁸ Back on familiar ground, still working for the corps, and buoyed by all he had seen and heard in Europe, his art career began to blossom. He tried to educate himself with the latest information on pottery and glazes (fig. 3.13). At the Atlanta library he checked out A.L. Hetherington's *Chinese Ceramic Glazes* (1937) and R. Horace Jenkins's recently published *Practical Pottery for Craftsmen and Students*.⁵⁹ According to his tiny agenda



Fig. 3.13 Unknown photographer, [Charles T. Williams working in ceramic in his Atlanta studio], ca. 1947, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

to transfer to the Corps of Engineers in Dallas and live with his parents in Fort Worth. Charles's lifelong friend George Fortenberry, who had known the Williams family since they lived in Mineral Wells, Texas, in the 1930s, suspected the new living arrangements would prove challenging: "Mrs. [T.L.] Williams was a grimly determined Baptist who had named her son for a Dallas evangelist and had actually tried to dedicate his life to the ministry."⁶² By contrast, her son Charles was not a practicing Baptist, had named his only son for Karl Marx, and sketched and sculpted from live nude models. (Williams was irreverent, and art was his religion. For example, he titled a woodcut print of a modernistic abstract male and female figure, with a Henry Moore-like hole in the man's arm, *Immaculate Conception*.) But it must have worked, as Fortenberry wryly observed, because Charles Williams became "a religiously dedicated artist."⁶³

book (which he carried back from Paris), in September Williams sought "books and plaster" and made a note about "buttons, kiln, glazes, blueprint of plaster mixture." He became acquainted with an assistant professor at the Department of Ceramic Engineering at the Georgia School of Technology named W. Carey Hansard. They met on more than one occasion, discussing kilns and presumably glazes.⁶⁰ Williams made and fired ceramic figures, such as the small, emerald-green seated female figure who reclines with her head cradled in her uplifted hands, like a three-dimensional interpretation of a Matisse odalisque (fig. 3.14).⁶¹

This flurry of activity came to a halt just over a year later when Williams's wife, Louise, whom he had known since college in Abilene, Texas, died unexpectedly from viral pneumonia. Devastated and alone, with a five-year-old son, Williams left Atlanta for good in 1947 to move closer to his family. He was able



Fig. 3.14 Charles T. Williams, [Seated figure], ca. 1948, ceramic, 10 1/4 x 7 1/2 x 6 3/4 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Karl B. Williams.

The upheaval proved fortuitous, as Fort Worth turned out to be an ideal crucible for Williams and his unwavering determination to make art. First, he was able to stabilize his domestic life, and his family helped him care for his young son. He also found his lifelong partner: Within a few years of arriving in Fort Worth, Williams fell in love with and married Anita Stuart McConnell, whom he met when she was Karl's third grade teacher. Anita and Charles became a dual income family, likely helping Williams retain the freedom to choose what kind of art he created.⁶⁴ Equally important, his responsibilities with the Army Corps in Dallas built on his intensive training in Europe, increasing his drafting and engineering knowledge and priming him to easily visualize and fabricate drawings and sculpture. These skills provided the grounding for his more complex projects, such as devising the mechanics of the outdoor fountain commissioned by collectors Ted and Lucile Weiner in 1955.⁶⁵ Additionally, his father, T.L. Williams, and brother, Joe, ran a successful construction business in the region.⁶⁶ Charles had worked with both of them briefly in the 1930s.⁶⁷ Even if his family might not have understood his decision to be an artist, Charles gained access through them to contractors, vendors, and the latest technology that he used in his art business.

Finally, Williams discovered a group of established Texas artists, known today as the Fort Worth Circle. Their roots could be traced back to the Fort Worth School of Fine Arts, founded by Sallie Gillespie, Blanche McVeigh, and Evaline Sellors and opened in October 1932 (under its original name, The Texas School of Art). McVeigh and Sellors are credited with organizing Fort Worth's earliest exhibitions of modern European art, borrowing objects from private collections. Historian Scott Grant Barker has pointed out that their exhibitions marked the first time that works by Brâncuși, André Derain, Fernand Léger, Henri Matisse, Amedeo Modigliani, Picasso, Maurice Utrillo, and other European modernists were publicly shown to a Fort Worth audience.⁶⁸

The members of the Fort Worth Circle were a progressive, cosmopolitan group that shared Williams's interest in art, classical music, ballet, and theater. They were influenced by, and attentive to, European modernism and especially the School of Paris, including both the cubist and surrealist branches. Many—including Sellors and husband and wife Dickson Reeder and Flora Blanc Reeder—had formal training from art schools on the East Coast or in Paris. As most of the participants were a few years older than Williams, they also provided him with a blueprint for an art career. They had been exhibiting publicly for years, including in an important 1944 group show in New York where a critic identified them as a “compatible and independent-minded group.”⁶⁹ In the 1940s, the Reeders hosted European-style salons at their Fort Worth home. In the 1950s, the Reeder Children's School of Theater and Design was in its heyday, staging numerous productions. According to Scott Grant Barker, “Each year the Reeders recruited not only many local artists to work on their elaborate productions, but they also brought in actors to work as dramatic coaches, professional musicians to form an orchestra when required, and professional dancers to train the kids. Charles Williams, Ann and Jack Boynton, Sandra and McKie Trotter, and John Erickson were all credited as volunteers on the 1952 production of *The Happy Hypocrite*.”⁷⁰ By about 1960, the social locus in Fort Worth had shifted entirely to Williams's studio, where Charlie and Anita held countless soirees and many impromptu gatherings.



Fig. 3.15 Unknown photographer, [*Charles T. Williams and Gene Owens in foundry*], ca. 1963, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.



Fig. 3.16 Gene Owens (b. 1931), *Cinder Sun*, 1964, bronze, 10 7/8 x 9 5/8 x 4 3/4 in., Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Bequest of Ruth Carter Stevenson, 2014.4. © Gene Owens.

Williams built his first dedicated art studio in the double garage behind his family's house at 4723 El Campo in Fort Worth, a space that came to be called "Charlie's shop."⁷¹ By the spring of 1948, he had enrolled in night school at Texas Christian University (TCU) and by 1952 had earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree.⁷² Initially, the core participants at Charlie's shop were TCU students and professors and the slightly older Fort Worth Circle generation. As an army veteran and an older student, Williams was nearer in age to his TCU professors, like John W. (Jack) Erickson, who became a lifelong friend. He quickly struck up a friendship with fellow student James (Jack) Boynton. Although Boynton was ten years younger, they remained best friends for the rest of Williams's life.⁷³ Boynton knew he was part of something special, later recalling, "We were sort of the avant-garde of Fort Worth at that moment."⁷⁴

He remembered the older artist's energy, enthusiasm, and generosity toward other artists in those years and how Charlie rode the bus to work in Dallas each day, returning to Fort Worth to work "half the night on sculpture."⁷⁵ Boynton called Williams "the most patient man I ever saw," especially when it came to nurturing younger artists like himself.⁷⁶ In 1960, Boynton gifted Williams a wooden sculpture featuring three square shaped heads, made of blocks of wood, nestled inside a hinged wooden box. The title is *Captive Audience* (pl. 17). The central mustachioed head inside the box bears a telltale resemblance to Charlie. The flanking "blockheads" may represent Boynton himself and their good friend, the artist Jim Love.

Boynton fondly described how friends and guests came through Charlie's shop at all hours of the day and night, making it feel like "Grand Central Station every day."⁷⁷ Around this time, Williams received a letter from his European girlfriend, Lílá, who expressed dismay at his frenetic work schedule and commute: "[You are] riding 3 (hrs) a day to come and go from your job. . . . I hate to think

you're wasting 3 hours a day you could use for ceramic [*sic*] or just to recuperate."⁷⁸ Even from across the Atlantic, Lílá continued to ruminate about Williams's artistic welfare and career.

Gene Owens, another of Williams's many friends in Fort Worth, first met Williams in 1951 while Owens was in a Texas Wesleyan College undergraduate course taught by painter McKie Trotter. Trotter often took his art students to visit Williams to show them how "a real sculptor" operated.⁷⁹ Over the years Owens dedicated countless hours in the studio and foundry with Williams (fig. 3.15), where he produced works like *Cinder Sun* (fig. 3.16). Like Williams, Owens did not adhere strongly to the Christian faith with which he was raised. Unlike Williams, he developed a fascination with ancient Greek, Eastern, and South Asian deities and religions that he incorporated into his art. Yet both artists shared a belief that the bronze casting process itself was somewhat transcendental.

Owens recalls countless tales about Williams, including one that conveyed the older artist's irreverence toward religion, or more particularly, "Holy Roller" religion when it disrupted his work.⁸⁰ As Owens tells it, one night a religious group installed a revival tent on the empty land right behind Charlie's studio. The churchgoers created a ruckus that went on into the wee hours of the morning. After tolerating it for a few hours, Williams, wearing his workman's overalls and carrying his trademark gold cigarette holder, left his shop to see what was going on. In the tent he found two women lying on the sawdust floor "kicking and screaming and hollering." Owens wanted nothing to do with it so remained near the back of the tent. Williams walked down the aisle, smoking his cigarette and looking from side to side at the congregation. He approached one of the women on the floor, then looked up at the preacher, who told him, "Mister, you're interfering with the Lord's work." Williams took another puff of his cigarette and replied, "The Lord's work? Hell, I thought it was the Devil's!"⁸¹

Such was the energy at Charlie's place that visiting it became de rigueur for anyone in the area who was interested in contemporary art. Williams himself served as catalyst, his studio as the "social center," according to the artist Roger Winter.⁸² Williams remained in his studio on El Campo until 1952, when he moved to his second studio, southeast of town near what is today Highway 820 and Sun Valley Road. The list of studio visitors reads like a who's who of the regional art scene: Heri Bartscht, Jack Boynton and his wife Ann Williams Boynton, David Brownlow, Bob and D'Aun Cunningham, Jane Cunningham, Jack and Jane Erickson, Kelly Fearing, Roy Fridge, Duayne Hatchett, Jim Love, David McManaway, Gene Owens, Dickson and Flora Reeder, Evaline Sellors, Emily Guthrie Smith, Ed Storms, McKie Trotter, Bror Utter, and Donald Vogel. They rubbed shoulders with friends, gallerists, and local luminaries like Dallas Museum of Art Director Jerry Bywaters, Fort Worth Art Center Director Henry Caldwell, Fort Worth Art Association President Sam Cantey III, Fort Worth Art Association Director Dan Defenbacher, actors and musicians Dick Harris and his wife Georgie, Dallas Museum for Contemporary Arts Director Douglas MacAgy, Neiman Marcus president and arts patron Stanley Marcus, patron and gallerist Betty [Brooke] McLean Blake, and collectors such as Raymond Nasher and Ted and Lucile Weiner. When they came to Texas to install or speak about art or architecture, Buckminster Fuller, Claes Oldenburg, and Isamu Noguchi each stopped in.⁸³ At the center of the scene were the gracious and generous hosts, Charles T. Williams and his beautiful, patient, and witty wife, Anita.⁸⁴

Canadian curator Douglas MacAgy was an example of the type of savvy, art world-pedigreed interlocutor with whom Williams engaged in North Texas. MacAgy trained in London and Pennsylvania, revitalized the California

School of Fine Arts by embracing abstraction (and bringing both Mark Rothko and Clyfford Still to teach there), served as a special consultant to the director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and was, from 1959–63, director of the Dallas Museum of Contemporary Art.⁸⁵ A decade later he wrote about his time in Dallas: “As an artist, a man with swinging curiosity and surprise perceptions, as a generous friend and relaxing host, the late Charles Williams was a key figure in bringing most of the rest together. . . . Again and again, Charlie’s new and older friends were drawn to his and Anita’s memorable parties.”⁸⁶ Between the TCU cohort, the Fort Worth Circle artists, and the Dallas contingent, Williams found people in Texas with whom he could truly relate.

At Charlie’s studio, art making and merrymaking went hand in hand. Conversations went on at all hours, fueled by martinis, beer, and cigarettes.⁸⁷ Williams seems to have internalized both lessons and an artistic ambiance from his European sojourn. The romance of Paris stuck with him, instilling a desire to recreate both the sociability and the artistic productivity in his new town. A close examination of some of the archival documents in the Williams Papers provides insight into Williams’s artistic practice and how he transformed social occasions into working parties, and vice versa, with a unique, European-inflected flair.

The concept of play itself was embedded in a paper-and-pencil parlor game that visitors to Williams’s studio played regularly. Nicknamed “The Game,” the rules were simple enough that any guest could partake: One person drew three basic lines on a sheet of paper, invented a title, and passed the paper to a partner. Using those three lines, the second person created a drawing to illustrate the title. The results were relatively quickly dashed off. It was easy enough to play even after a few drinks; indeed, the martinis and beer surely contributed to the creative flow. The Game was an icebreaker, an amusement, a form of entertainment, and never intended to create fine or finished works of art. As such, though, The Game provides a distinct and edifying view into Williams’s creative process. The Williams archive contains dozens of drawings from The Game, fortuitously saved by the Williams family.

The Game was similar in structure to the surrealist parlor game called the “Exquisite Corpse.” Also known by its French title, *Cadavre Exquis*, this game was invented in Paris around 1925 by André Breton, Marcel Duchamp, Jacques Prévert, and Yves Tanguy. To play, each participant sketches one segment of what is usually a trifold drawing, with the paper folded such that the other drawings are hidden.⁸⁸ Small lines indicate where the next person should connect their drawing. Unfolding the drawing reveals an “exquisite corpse,” at once beautiful and ghastly, made up of three connected

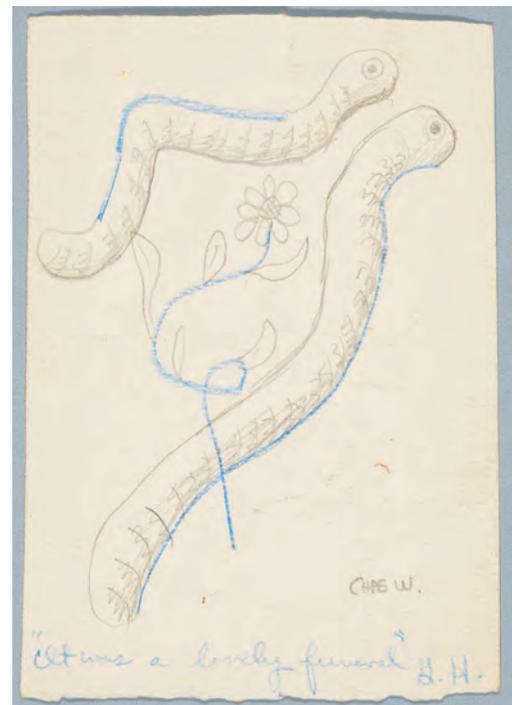


Fig. 3.17 Charles T. Williams and Georgie Harris, *The Game - It was a lovely funeral*, n.d., graphite and colored pencil on paper, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, The Game in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.



Fig. 3.18 Charles T. Williams, *Components*, 1965, metal ells and paint, 47 x 15 x 15 1/2 in., from *Charles T. Williams, Retrospective with Friends*, an exhibition organized by Diana R. Block, published by the University of North Texas Press, © Karl B. Williams.

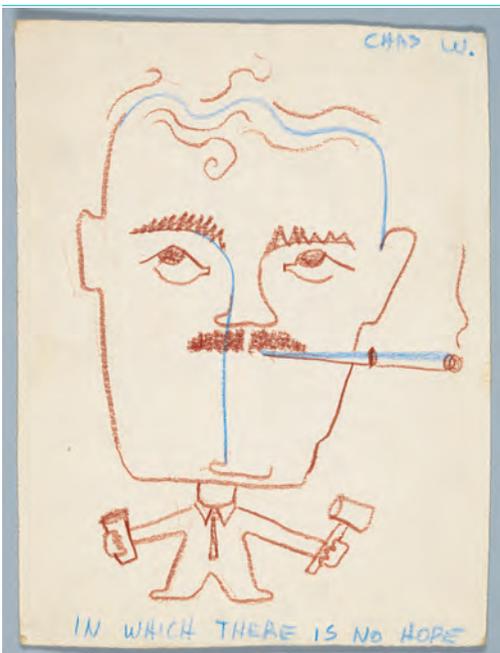


Fig. 3.19 Charles T. Williams and unknown collaborator, *The Game - In Which There Is No Hope*, n.d., colored pencil on paper, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, *The Game* in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

but essentially random sketches. The name was born early on when the surrealists, led by their founder, the French poet Breton, first played it with words, resulting in the nonsense sentence, “Le cadavre / exquis / boira / le vin / nouveau,” or “The exquisite corpse will drink the new wine.” The illustrated version of the Exquisite Corpse emblemized the surrealist spirit, privileging chance and whimsy and tapping into the unconscious. Individual agency was subsumed into the group dynamic.

The likely forbearer to the Exquisite Corpse is a nineteenth century paper-and-pencil game called “Consequences,” which involves multiple players who each contribute one sentence to a story detailing something that happened and what its consequences were. Breton commented that the Exquisite Corpse was like a pictorial adaptation of Consequences, noting, “Surely nothing was easier than to transpose this method to drawing, by using the same system of folding and concealing.”⁸⁹ Although we have no evidence that Williams engaged in these kinds of pencil games during his tour of duty, the parlor games and much of the historical documentation of them originated in Europe, just like the modern art that so intrigued him.

The twenty-seven examples of *The Game* exhibited in *The Art of the Scene* attest to the broad variety of studio visitors who played it. In one turn of *The Game*, a guest named Georgie Harris contributed three simple blue lines and the title “It was a lovely funeral” (fig. 3.17). With a colored pencil, Williams transformed Harris’s lines into two wide-eyed worms and a flower. The drawing is basic; the humor stems from the absurdity of talking worms remarking on a funeral, using the incongruous adjective “lovely.” The finished drawing and caption are unremarkable, perhaps generating a quick smile when Williams and Harris showed it to their friends. Williams used shading to give the worms dimension and added worm-like “segment” lines. In fact, *It was a lovely funeral* bears a striking resemblance to Williams’s “Ell” series of the 1960s, one of his last. For the Ell sculptures, Williams pieced together prefabricated industrial metal known as Ells to create curved columns, as in his 1965 piece *Components* (fig. 3.18), or donut



Fig. 3.20 Jack Boynton and Charles T. Williams, *The Game - Wood Is My Medium!*, n.d., colored pencil on paper, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, *The Game* in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

hair, thick eyebrows, moustache, and a lit cigarette in its holder. The sculptor wears a necktie; one hand holds a mallet, the other seems to hold a glass of beer. Whoever made the drawing surely reveled in poking fun at his host, the very person who generated the work's title, completely oblivious that in a few strokes he would be the unwitting star of that round of *The Game*. No doubt the evening's guests erupted in laughter when they were shown the finished drawing.

In a collaboration with Jack Boynton, *Wood Is My Medium!* (fig. 3.20), Williams seems again to be the subject, although more obliquely. In blue pencil, Boynton provided the title and lines that almost form a square surrounding a smaller rectangle. Williams used red pencil to transform it into a landscape in which a woodpecker just chopped down a tree with its beak. A lunchbox—presumably belonging to the working woodpecker-lumberjack—rests at the center of the scene.

shapes like *Small Blue Torus* (1966). Then he painted them in brilliant metallic colors. The formal similarities between *It was a lovely funeral* and *Components*, with its blue and green overlapping Ells that look like vertical earthworms, are compelling, suggesting that while the artist was casually playing *The Game*, his creative pistons were firing and he envisioned future three-dimensional objects.⁹⁰ Looking at *Components* with the drawing in mind, one can see the spirit of anthropomorphized worms in the twisted blue and green metal tubes.

Williams himself is the subject as well as one of the makers in *The Game* drawing titled *In Which There Is No Hope* (fig. 3.19). He first drew three blue lines and signed his name “CHAS W.” Next, with brown pencil or crayon, his unidentified partner (most likely a good

friend) made the lines into a portrait of Williams himself with a giant head, wavy

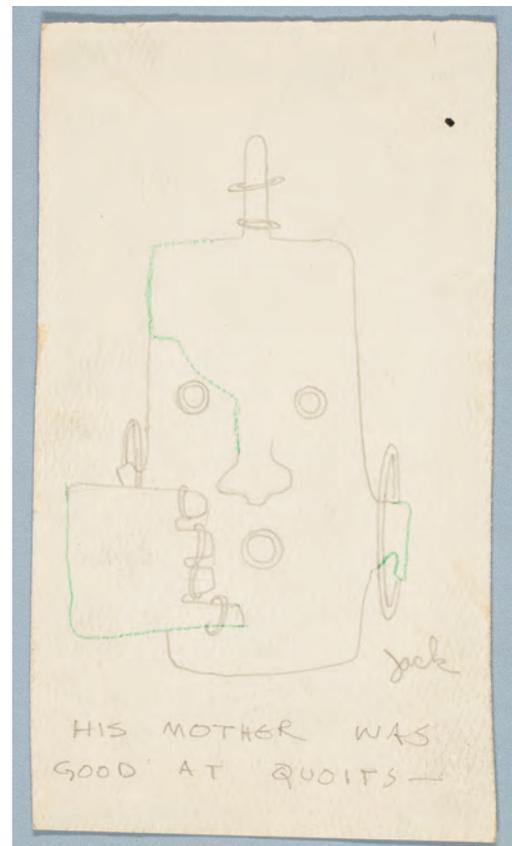


Fig. 3.21 Jack Boynton and unknown collaborator, *The Game - His Mother Was Good at Quoits*, n.d., graphite and colored pencil on paper, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, *The Game* in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

Another drawing, *His Mother Was Good at Quoits* (fig. 3.21), depicts a game within The Game.⁹¹ Quoits, a traditional ring-toss game, was first recorded in the United Kingdom in the early nineteenth century, though it is probably much older. The rings can be made of wood, rubber, or metal, cast onto spikes or pins, and can be played outdoors or indoors. A tabletop version was once popular in pubs. *His Mother Was Good at Quoits* originated with three green lines (from an unidentified contributor) that Boynton transformed into a person with rings encircling his ears, fingers, and a dowel-shape (like a ring holder) that juts out from of his head. The figure's eyes and mouth are also represented as rings. Although primarily a painter, in this sketch Boynton toyed with three-dimensional views, drawing the quoit rings from various angles. The mischievous and absurd image is surrealist at its core, a double entendre on the obsessions of motherhood (a mother so extreme about her game that she raised a quoit-headed son) and the Freudian implications of a game of pegs and rings. Like all The Game drawings, it serves as a metaphor for the creative process itself—or the multiple creative processes—that happened in Charlie's studio. Along with their mutual love of art, Boynton and Williams shared an appreciation for the ludicrous. Much like the Exquisite Corpse, the collaborative rules of The Game encouraged chance connections that brought the players closer to the unconscious.

Williams was the draftsman in *Portrait of a Soft Gargoyle* (fig. 3.22), originated by McKie Trotter, who provided three abstract red lines and likely the title. The figure nearly fills the page, with legs and arms bent to create a rectilinear form, as the gargoyle's right hand holds up its head. Like in the worms drawing, the humor here derives from irony: gargoyles are made of stone and intended to look frightening, but Williams's version looks bored, even silly. The gesture of a gargoyle resting its head on its own clawed hand is like that of the beloved so-called "Stryge" chimera on the north tower of Notre-Dame de Paris, who holds its head in both its hands (fig. 3.23). Its contemplative pose, as if gazing out at all of Paris, led artists and photographers to immortalize Stryge, or "the vampire." The Game's *Portrait of a Soft Gargoyle* has fingernail claws more



Fig. 3.22 Charles T. Williams and McKie Trotter, *The Game - Portrait of a Soft Gargoyle*, n.d., graphite and colored pencil on paper, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, The Game in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

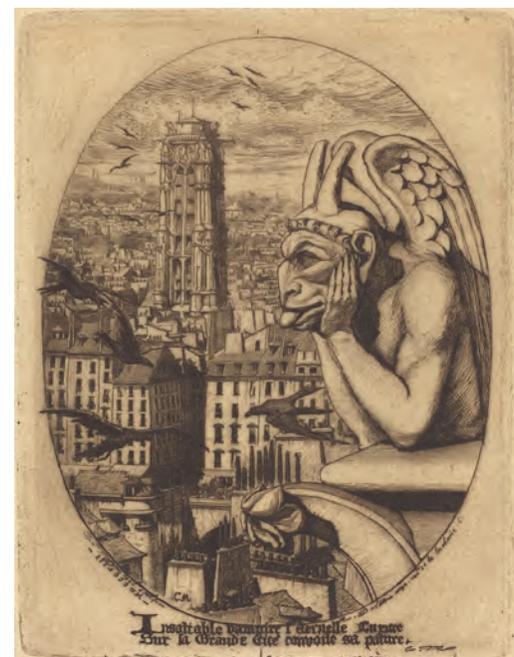


Fig. 3.23 Charles Meryon (1821–1868), *Le stryge (The Vampire)*, 1853, etching on green paper, 6 5/8 x 5 1/16 in., National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Myron A. Hofer in memory of his mother, Mrs. Charles Hofer, 1945.6.2.



Fig. 3.24 Lee Angle, [Charles T. Williams's black marble sculpture *Jean Valjean*], ca. 1952, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Lee Angle.

his friends and guardians. Hugo's tale allegedly inspired French architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc to add chimeras, including Stryge, to the cathedral during a major restoration project in the 1840s. Williams found inspiration in another Victor Hugo novel for his 1952 marble sculpture *Jean Valjean* (fig. 3.24), named for the criminal-turned-hero of *Les Misérables* (1862). Perhaps Williams had read the book, or he had seen the 1935 Academy Award-winning Hollywood movie of the same name that starred Fredric March and Charles Laughton.

Hollywood almost definitely provided the inspiration for another turn of *The Game*. In the drawing *Some Like It Hot!* (fig. 3.25), the participants were someone named "Myers," who provided the initial lines and title, and Williams, recognizable as the draftsman.⁹² The drawing's title seems to have been lifted from the romantic comedy *Some Like It Hot!* starring Marilyn Monroe,

akin to artist Charles Meryon's 1853 etching of the Stryge chimera than to the actual stone figure at Notre Dame, suggesting Williams had familiarity with the print.

Williams was also acquainted with the stone chimera and with its origin story. His 1945–46 datebook entries document at least one visit to Notre-Dame de Paris on the Île de la Cité, and his curiosity likely would have led him up to the Tower with Chimeras. Notre-Dame was the setting for Victor Hugo's classic 1831 *Notre-Dame de Paris*, known in English as *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*. Although it introduced the now-legendary hunchback, Quasimodo, the novel's primary protagonist is the cathedral itself. Quasimodo considers Notre-Dame's monsters and demons to be



Fig. 3.25 Myers and Charles T. Williams, *The Game - Some Like It Hot!*, n.d., graphite and colored pencil on paper, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, *The Game* in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

directed by Billy Wilder, and the winner of six Academy Awards. The film came out in 1959, offering a *terminus post quem* for the drawing. Williams filled the page, much as he did in *Portrait of a Soft Gargoyle*, with a jumbled, entangled mix of two people. It is a fitting illustration of the movie, which revolves around two male musicians played by Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis who accidentally witness the mob's 1929 Valentine's Day Massacre in Chicago. To escape retribution, the characters disguise themselves as women and join an all-girl band. Monroe plays Sugar Cane, the band's sultry lead singer and the object of both men's affection. Williams renders a clever interpretation of the film: As in theatrical comedy and tragedy masks, one of his faces smiles, the other has a downturned mouth. The figures' genders are not identifiable, yet there appears to be a breast jutting up. The Game drawing invokes the topsy turvy action of the film while also punning on the raunchy theme that sexually, some people like it "hot."

The drawing also reflects Williams's profound visual and tactile interest in women. In a 1948 letter, Lílá made a highly percipient observation about Williams's fascination with the female form, both in real life and plastic recreations. Of course, the two of them almost certainly visited multiple art exhibitions together, looking at painted and sculpted female figures, the latter of which also abound in public art throughout Europe. In her letter, Lílá seems to have been eagerly awaiting a reply from Charlie to her previous missives. Probably motivated by worry, her jealousy comes through: "Keep away from women and go ahead with your art, you'll get more satisfactions [*sic*] out of it."⁹³ In her entreaty for him to "keep away from women," Lílá, perhaps knowingly, set up a false dichotomy. For Williams, women and art were inextricably entwined.

Williams created more artworks based on the female form than any other subject. In the wide variety of media with which he engaged—wood, marble, cast bronze, hammered copper, welded rods, prints and drawings, to name a few—he obsessively revisited the physical, sensuous qualities of the female body. He explores the shape as a monumental abstract deity, as in the marble *Earth Mother* (pl. 13), and in the smooth walnut breasts, belly, and hips of the nearly life-size, quasi-geometric *Torso #2* (pl. 3). Throughout his investigations, we find Williams playing with his aesthetic media, as in the hammered copper *Odalisque* (pl. 9) commissioned by Ridglea Country Club. In one clever example, *Seated Figure* (pl. 6), he harnesses line by creating a drawing in three-dimensions using bent and welded metal rod. The sculpture toys with negative space, incorporating it as an integral component of the female body. As a final flourish, Williams channeled his ribald humor into the sculpture by adding curly metal pubic hair.

Charles T. Williams went to Europe for work, but it was the history, the art scene, the sense of novelty and playfulness, the bars, and the people that left the most lasting mark. It was a time in his life when work and play were forced to be separate things, when combining the two meant not much more than drawing or taking photographs as he walked to work. As he gained critical skills during his time in the Army Corps, Williams committed himself to his artistic passions, romance, and meeting influential people from all over Europe and America, finding that his love for these things did not have to be mutually exclusive. The crass, crude, and erotic were elevated to high art, and high art was brought to bars and pubs and romance. Each fed into the other, with his romantic exploits providing inspiration for his art and his art attracting the eye of women like Louise, Lílá,

and Anita. In modernism, Williams found an artistic style as bold and eager as he was, a movement that sought to reimagine what it meant to be an artist or even a person, a movement that, like Williams, sought to blur the lines between work and play.

Perhaps he was simply born with that special single-mindedness that artists need to really thrive, or perhaps it was slowly nurtured and awakened during his time in Paris. Regardless, he returned home with an expanded mind and sense of the world, and through unfortunate circumstances found himself in Texas, hardly the cradle of culture that he had grown accustomed to in Europe. Ever the opportunist, however, he ingratiated himself with what was a relatively young and burgeoning modern art scene; his wit, humor, and good nature made him a locus of ideas, people, and artistic exchange. Through his time in Fort Worth, we see how his love of play became ever more entwined with his art, through both the playful nature of his work and the parlor games that filled so many evenings. It is as though he took everything that he adored about Paris and set about making it flourish in Fort Worth.

One object in particular symbolizes Williams's longing for a European artistic ambiance: In 1952, he crafted a beautiful L-shaped wooden bar, simplified and modern, but nonetheless reminiscent of Harry's Bar and all those other places where he spent his evenings in Paris. The bar itself stood for many years in Williams's own Fort Worth studio, a resting place for the drinks and elbows of so many artists and intellectuals, friends and lovers, coworkers and playmates. Perhaps it is fitting that Williams saw the bar, a place of drinking and merrymaking, as perfectly compatible with and in fact *vital* to his working space. Indeed, for Williams, art *always* imitated play, and play *always* imitated art.

NOTES

1. Unless otherwise noted, sources for biographical details are documented in this volume's chronology.
2. Karl Williams, conversation with the author, April 6, 2022.
3. Between February 4 and June 24, 1951, Williams took a leave of absence from the corps to focus on his education.
4. Scott Grant Barker, "Karl Williams Oral History Transcript" (unpublished manuscript), 2021, 4, Amon Carter Museum of American Art Oral History Archives. The full quotation is poignant: "There was not a moment that that drive ever left him, and I think that probably contributed to some of his health issues and probably contributed to his early death."
5. Douglas MacAgy, *one i at a time* (exhibition catalogue) (Dallas: Pollock Galleries, Meadows School of the Arts, Southern Methodist University, 1971), 9.
6. Ryan Moore, "The Bob Crozier Collection: Aerial Reconnaissance in World War II," Library of Congress, February 9, 2017, <https://blogs.loc.gov>.
7. "Application for Federal Employment," June 7, 1948, in Army Corps of Engineers Records [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers. Charles Truett Williams Papers, Amon Carter Museum of American Art (hereinafter, "ACMAA Williams Papers").
8. Diana R. Block, "Introduction," in *Charles T. Williams, Retrospective with Friends* (exhibition catalogue), ed. Diana R. Block (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 1998), xi.
9. Before Williams was drafted, *LIFE* magazine published an article titled "New French Art: Picasso Fostered It Under Nazis" (November 13, 1944, 72-76). In 1947, according to *LIFE* magazine, Picasso was "the most talked about man in Paris" and "More people try to get into his studio than into any other private place in Paris" (Charles Wertenbaker, "Portrait of the Artist," *LIFE*, October 13, 1947, 97).
10. The German government labeled many international artists "degenerate" and organized a major touring exhibition of over 600 objects of degenerate art (*Entartete Kunst*) in Munich in 1937, featuring mostly German works; over 2 million visitors attended.
11. Williams's Paris girlfriend, Lila Ménard, wrote in a 1949 letter that the Canadian Peter Sager (an artist they both seemed to know personally) "will do work in Picasso's studio" (Lila [Ménard] to [Charles T. Williams], September 13, 1949, in Correspondence - Lila [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers).
12. Photos of Picasso in his studio during the war were published in both *LIFE* and *Vogue* in 1944. According to Alfred Barr Jr., director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York: "Since the liberation of Paris, Picasso has been very much in the news; and visits to his atelier have developed almost a standard pattern. Indeed Captain Philip W. Claffin, recently on leave in New York, reports that groups of G. I.'s are taken like tourists through Picasso's studio every Thursday morning" (Alfred H. Barr, "Picasso 1940-1944: A Digest with Notes," *The Bulletin of the Museum of Modern Art* 12, no. 3 (January 1945): 2, 5).
13. Germain Viatte, *Aftermath France, 1945-1955: New Images of Man* (London: Barbican Gallery, 1983), 27.
14. Charles de Gaulle publicly insinuated that Antoine Saint-Exupéry was supporting Germany, which allegedly drove the author into a bout of depression.
15. André Breton, co-author of the *Surrealist Manifesto* and the movement's founder, took charge of admitting members and was known to "excommunicate" artists from official Surrealism. Countless writers and artists, however, were influenced by the movement's style and how it privileged the unconscious mind and automatism.
16. Viatte, *Aftermath France*, 13. Paris's reigning position as the international art world capital would not last long after 1945. In the 1930s and 1940s, so many artists had emigrated to the United States and rubbed shoulders with American artists that New York City soon took over as the leader in the art world.
17. Clément Thiery, "Summer 1945, American GIs at the Sorbonne," *France-Amérique*, August 27, 2020, <https://france-amerique.com>.
18. Viatte, *Aftermath France*, 27.
19. Andrew Israel Ross, "Urban Desires: Practicing Pleasure in the 'City of Light,' 1848-1900" (Dissertation in History, The University of Michigan, 2011), 101-7.

20. The “African mask” origin for the two figures in *Les Femmes d'Alger* has never been definitively established, although they resemble ceremonial masks from the Fang people of Gabon.
21. Christopher Green, *Picasso: Architecture and Vertigo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 51.
22. The classic essay on the Museum of Modern Art’s embrace of “primitivism” is Thomas McEvilly, “Doctor Lawyer Indian Chief: ‘Primitivism’ in 20th Century Art at the Museum of Modern Art in 1984,” *Artforum* 23, no. 3 (November 1984): 54–61.
23. Andrew Meldrum, “Stealing Beauty,” *Guardian*, March 15, 2006, <https://www.theguardian.com>.
24. The painting led to the development of Cubism and much twentieth-century modern art and appeared in numerous publications. In its October 13, 1947, issue, *LIFE* magazine reported somewhat dismissively on Picasso: “[with *Les Femmes d'Alger*] Picasso launched into his ‘Negro’ period. He transferred to his own canvases the fearsome distortions and grotesque colors of Africa’s witch doctors, painting sharp, elongated noses, staring button eyes and pointed bellies. Around Picasso swarmed cultists who made him the high priest of modern art, collected fetishes made with bits of African hair and teeth. To induce the proper primitive mood some even took ether or hashish as the master himself once did” (Charles Wertenbaker, “Picasso,” 94).
25. Karl Williams, email to the author, May 2, 2022.
26. Thomas Motley, “The Sculptural Works of Charles T. Williams,” in Block, *Charles T. Williams, Retrospective with Friends*, 7.
27. Block, “Introduction,” xi. The names of artists Williams saw in Paris are repeated by many, yet aside from considerable visual evidence, we don’t have anything definitive documented from the artist himself. The Trocadéro/Musée de l’Homme was one of the few museums open during the Occupation; its director was actively involved in the Resistance.
28. Williams’s African-style mask is visually similar to the style of the Dan people from the Ivory Coast or Liberia.
29. Katie Robinson Edwards, *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas, 2014), 225. For a discussion of the racism of “primitivism” in Texas, see pp. 214–28. Also see S. Janelle Montgomery, “An Advocate for Art: Charles T. Williams in Fort Worth” in this volume.
30. Charles T. Williams, “Agenda,” 1946, January 26, March 18 and 24, uncatalogued notebook in ACMAA Williams Papers.
31. Williams, February and March. There is no mention of visiting the former Trocadéro/Musée de l’Homme.
32. Williams, February 20.
33. Charles [T. Williams] to [Louise Williams], November 16, 1945, in Correspondence - General [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
34. Barker, “Karl Williams Oral History,” 2.
35. Kelly Fearing discussed this with the author. One of the Fort Worth Circle artists traced everyone’s feet so he could give them ballet slippers for Christmas.
36. Charles T. Williams, *[Photographs of Paris]*, 1945–46, in Photographs - World War II [1]-[4] folders, ACMAA Williams Papers; Williams, “Agenda,” January 23.
37. The full text read “Un Document sensationnel et [illegible]: Le Carnet de Notes d’Hermann Goering” (“A Sensational and [illegible] Document: The Notebook of Hermann Goering”). Hermann Goering (also Göring) was the lead architect of the Nazis’ police state and was convicted as a war criminal at Nuremberg.
38. One Army report estimated that eighty percent of single men and fifty percent of married men engaged in sexual relations during their stay in Europe during World War II. “Sex Overseas: ‘What Soldiers Do’ Complicates WWII History,” *Radio* (New York: WNYC, May 31, 2013), <https://www.wnyc.org>.
39. “Sex Overseas.”
40. Lila [Ménard] to [Charles T. Williams], June 29, 1948, in Correspondence - Lila [2] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
41. Lila [Ménard] to [Charles T. Williams], March 21, 1949, in Correspondence - Lila [2] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
42. Lila [Ménard] to [Charles T. Williams], October 5, 1947, in Correspondence - Lila [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.

43. Lilà [Ménard] to [Charles T. Williams], February 7, 1948, in Correspondence - Lila [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
44. Lilà to Charles, June 29, 1948.
45. Lilà [Ménard] to [Charles T. Williams], November 4, 1947, in Correspondence - Lila [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
46. Williams never moved to Germany or Austria. It is possible the process was stalled due to an outstanding debt he owed to Hardin-Simmons University. Louise Williams died in August 1947; by October that year Williams was living at his parents' house on El Campo in Fort Worth. Charles T. Williams to Business Office, Hardin-Simmons University, October 26, 1948, in Army Corps of Engineers Records [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers; "Application for Federal Employment."
47. By October 13, 1947, Lilà was aware that Louise Williams had died.
48. Lilà's divorce announcement doubled as a 1966 New Year's greeting; Williams died of a heart attack in March of that year. The card reads "Avec ses meilleurs voeux pour une heureuse année 1966 Gisèle Lippens vous annonce son divorce d'avec André Ménard" ("With her best wishes for a happy new year 1966, Gisèle Lippens announces her divorce from André Ménard") ("Gisèle Lippens Divorce Announcement," January 14, 1966, in Correspondence - Lila [2] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers).
49. Simon Difford, "Harry's Bar," Difford's Guide - for Discerning Drinkers, December 17, 2015, <https://www.diffordsguide.com>; David Chazan, "A Century of Harry's Bar in Paris," BBC News, November 25, 2011, <https://www.bbc.com>.
50. "In 1923, Harry MacElhone, its former barman, bought the bar and added his name to it. He would be responsible for making it into a legendary Parisian landmark." In 1960, Ian Fleming forever linked James Bond to Harry's New York Bar in the short story, *A View to a Kill* ("Harry's New York Bar," Wikipedia, July 2, 2022, <https://en.wikipedia.org>; "Harry's New York Bar Paris, France," Atlas Obscura, n.d., <https://www.atlasobscura.com>).
51. Williams, "Agenda," May 11.
52. Charles to Louise, November 16, 1945. Williams documents another meeting with Rivington on March 25, 1946. Two quizzical references in Williams's 1946 agenda mention meeting a "Chas. W. Hauke / Hanke / Hawke." It is possible this was a nickname for César Mange de Hauke, an art dealer who was in Paris during the war, looting artworks during the Nazi era and selling them to established galleries such as Knoedler (Williams, "Agenda," January 3).
53. Katie Robinson Edwards, "Gene Owens Oral History Transcript" (unpublished manuscript), 2008, 75-76. According to Karl Williams: "I was told by CTW's studio assistant and frequent driver, Leon Walters, that CTW visited with Miller while he was on a trip to California. Somewhere around here there's a battered Obelisk Press copy of *Tropic of Cancer* also a number of other Miller books out of the studio bookcase" (Karl Williams, email to author, May 2, 2022).
54. Robinson Edwards, "Owens Oral History," 77; Karl Williams, email and conversation with the author, April 30, 2022.
55. Robinson Edwards, "Owens Oral History," 76.
56. "I.B.F. Trap No. 1" (Harry's New York Bar, ca 1946), in Photographs - World War II [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
57. Robinson Edwards, "Owens Oral History," 72.
58. Williams, "Agenda," May 16.
59. A.L. Hetherington, *Chinese Ceramic Glazes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937); R. Horace Jenkins, *Practical Pottery for Craftsmen and Students* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing, 1941).
60. Williams, "Agenda." Regarding the Kiln Dealer - July 5; "get library books on Chinese Ceramics and Practical Pottery" - July 16; "glazes" - August 31; "buttons, kiln, glazes, blueprint of plaster mixture" - September 2; "books and plaster" - September 17; "[Announcements]," *The American Ceramic Society Bulletin* 25, no. 5 (May 1946): 51; Bruce J. O'Connor, "Ceramic and Structural Clays, and Shales, of Whitfield County, Georgia" (Information Circular 73, Atlanta, 1988), 50, <https://epd.georgia.gov>.
61. Henri Matisse, *Odalisque couchée aux magnolias*, 1923, oil on canvas, 1923.
62. George Fortenberry, "A Friendship," in Block, *Charles T. Williams, Retrospective with Friends*, 12.
63. Fortenberry, 13.

64. After the war, the GI bill swelled the enrollment of colleges and universities, leading to an increase in art professors who had steady salaries and could therefore work in any style they chose. In the decade after the war, this phenomenon began to be associated ideologically with American freedom and was used as a political tool internationally. See Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom and the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).
65. Charles T. Williams, "The Design and Execution of a Fountain Sculpture" (MFA Thesis, Texas Christian University, 1955).
66. Joe [Williams] to Charles [T. Williams], September 8, 1947, in Correspondence - General [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
67. "Record or Request for Approval of Promotion and/or Reassignment," June 28, 1943, in Army Corps of Engineers Records [3] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
68. Scott Grant Barker, email to Amon Carter staff, July 1, 2022. Also see Kendall Curlee, "Fort Worth School," Texas State Historical Association, January 30, 2022, www.tshaonline.org.
69. Jane Myers, "Progressive Rebels and True Believers: How the Fort Worth Circle Made Art New," in *Intimate Modernism: Fort Worth Circle Artists in the 1940s* (exhibition catalogue), ed. Jane Myers (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum, 2008), 21. For the studio and Williams's connection to the Fort Worth Circle, see S. Janelle Montgomery's essay.
70. Barker, email.
71. Robinson Edwards, *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas*, 329.
72. Boynton calls it "night school"; his future wife, Ann Williams (no relation to Charles) was also in TCU night school.
73. Karl Williams has pointed out that Boynton was very much like Williams in that he was completely dedicated to art and to being an artist, all the time. That may have contributed to why Boynton and Charlie hit it off immediately (Karl Williams, conversation with the author, April 6, 2022).
74. Katie Robinson Edwards, "Jack Boynton Oral History Transcript" (unpublished manuscript), 2007, 6.
75. Robinson Edwards, 4.
76. Eleanor Kempner Freed, "Art: Requiem for a Sculptor," *Houston Post*, April 10, 1966, clipping in microfilm reel 1803, Charles T. Williams Papers, 1949-1966, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution (hereinafter, "AAA Williams Papers").
77. Kempner Freed.
78. Lilá to Charles, November 4, 1947.
79. Matt Szal, "Sculpting the New Circle" (unpublished manuscript), n.d., 4, essay in Williams, Charles folder, Amon Carter Museum of American Art Artist Files.
80. Gene had spent a summer at the University of Texas Austin learning mold-making from Charles Umlauf.
81. Robinson Edwards, "Owens Oral History," 85.
82. Robinson Edwards, *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas*, 207.
83. Robinson Edwards, 207. James Johnson Sweeney, the Director of The Museum of Modern Art, likely visited Charlie's studio ca. 1953 or 1954; Sweeney visited Boynton, Erickson, and Trotter's Fort Worth studios at the suggestion of Dan Defenbacher (Robinson Edwards, "Boynton Oral History," 17).
84. Charles and Anita, Karl's third grade teacher, married in August 1951. Karl was in fourth grade and it was Charles's last year at the El Campo studio. Presumably, getting remarried spurred Williams to find a new home.
85. "Douglas G. MacAgy Dies at 60; Hirshhorn Exhibitions Curator" (obituary), *New York Times*, September 7, 1973, 38; Robinson Edwards, *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas*, 228-31.
86. MacAgy, *one i at a time*, 9.
87. Robinson Edwards, "Owens Oral History," 73.

88. All these artists were involved in the Dada and Surrealist movements, which had been underway since World War I. Breton published the *Surrealist Manifesto* in 1924.

89. David Mitchell, "Write and Fold Games," The Public Paperfolding History Project, n.d., <http://www.origamiheaven.com>.

90. Because The Game drawings are undated, it's difficult to discern which came first, the drawing, *It was a lovely funeral*, or the sculpture, *Components*. What is clear is that Williams was moving back and forth between two- and three-dimensions, and the drawing either forecasted or recalled a completed sculpture.

91. *His Mother Was Good at Quoits* is signed "Jack," which could be Jack Erickson and not Boynton. Based on the handwriting and the existence of other The Game drawings signed "JWE" (Jack Erickson), the *Quoits* draftsman seems to be Jack Boynton. In this case, Boynton may also have added the title.

92. We were unable to identify who all The Game participants were, even with the generous assistance of Williams's son, Karl. Only "Myers" last name is known as of this writing.

93. Lila to Charles, June 29, 1948. Later in that sentence she explains, "and . . . so I may have a chance to keep you."



An Advocate for Art: Charles T. Williams in Fort Worth

S. Janelle Montgomery



Fig. 4.1 [The 1939 Fort Worth Artists Exhibition at the Fort Worth Art Association gallery], Fort Worth Public Library building, courtesy of the Genealogy, History, and Archives Unit, Fort Worth Public Library [Historic Photograph Collection, U-0032].

At the end of World War II, as Europe rebuilt and the bulk of the Western art world completed its shift from Paris to New York, the art scene in the city of Fort Worth began a transition of its own. In 1945 a gallery run by the Fort Worth Art Association (FWAA) provided almost all of the city's art exhibitions and programs (fig. 4.1). Public schools offered art instruction, which the FWAA supplemented with gallery lectures and classes, at least for the White children. Those seeking advanced education looked to the north and east, to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) or the Art Institute of Chicago. A group of artists now known as the Fort Worth Circle dominated local and regional exhibitions. Most of them had roots in the city, and many had trained on the East Coast and

traveled extensively in Europe. During the war, they put their skills to work as designers and model makers in the defense industry. Their art reflected their encounters in Europe, bringing modernism to a town of 200,000 where many of their patrons claimed descent from early Anglo settlers.



Fig. 4.2 Unknown photographer, [Charles T. Williams at about age three], ca. 1921, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

Charles Truett Williams (1918–1966) came to Fort Worth in October 1947. A photograph of him taken around 1921, when he was about three years old, looks like millions of other childhood pictures, except Williams's hands seem too big even for his chubby toddler's body (fig. 4.2). As he grew, he made his first forays into art with drawings and prints. Following high school, he worked as a stonemason, later joining the Army Corps of Engineers, which employed him as a draftsman for many years. Shortly before turning thirty, Williams took up sculpture. He initially worked in ceramic and, after settling in Fort Worth, progressed to wood, stone, and finally metal, making pieces at once monumental and intricate. He rapidly mastered materials and techniques and quickly won recognition. He shared his knowledge freely, and his studio became a gathering place for anyone interested in art. Williams advocated for art in Fort Worth,

cultivating collaborations with his fellow artists and museum and gallery professionals to improve standards of art production and exhibition. By the time he died, a brief two decades later, “Cowtown” boasted two full-fledged art museums, both housed in modernist architectural gems, with a third on the way.

A PLACE FOR ART

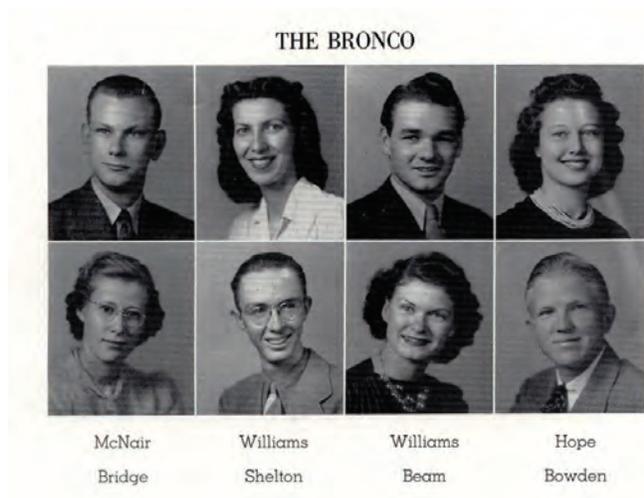


Fig. 4.3 Unknown photographer(s), [Charles and Louise Williams on yearbook staff], 1941, black-and-white photographs, *The Bronco, Yearbook of Hardin-Simmons University*, Hardin-Simmons University Photo Collection at Hardin-Simmons University.

Although it was far from clear for Williams in 1947, the move to Fort Worth secured his future as an artist. Born into a farming family in Weatherford in 1918, Williams graduated from Mineral Wells High School and went to work for his father, who had by then become a respected stonemason. Two years later, Williams enrolled at Weatherford Junior College. In 1939, he matriculated at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, studying physics, math, and art. There he met Louise Beaver, a journalism student from Dallas who had been born in 1920 in Wichita, Kansas. By 1940, her junior and Charles’s sophomore year, the two of them were inseparable. She was associate editor of the newspaper and a feature editor on the yearbook; he worked as staff artist for

both. They both belonged to the school’s Art League. The “Campus Couples” page in the yearbook calls them Torchy and Mr. Torchy.¹ They married in February 1941 (fig. 4.3). At some point between 1930 and 1940, Louise’s family moved to Atlanta. The newlyweds joined them there, probably in mid-1941. Williams took a job as a civilian draftsman with the Army Corps of Engineers, studied life drawing at the High Museum of Art, and took evening classes in engineering drawing at Georgia Tech. In November, Louise gave birth to their son, Karl Boyd Williams.

In March 1944 the army drafted Charles and sent him to basic training at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.² He was dispatched to Europe in early 1945. While stationed in Paris, Williams absorbed that city’s culture and took every opportunity to travel around the continent, as Katie Robinson Edwards discusses in her essay. Upon his discharge in June 1946, Williams returned to Atlanta and resumed his civilian duties for the Corps of Engineers. Almost immediately, he began to experiment with ceramics, as entries in his datebook and photographs in the archives attest (see fig. 3.13). Before the war, Williams’s artistic endeavors consisted of drawings and linocut prints. With ceramics he ventured into three dimensions, probably inspired by art he had seen in Europe.

One year after Charles returned to Atlanta, Louise contracted pneumonia and died. If that were not enough bad news, Charles’s employer told him his project had reached completion and “his services would no longer

be needed.”³ Now a single parent with unemployment looming, Williams applied for and received a transfer to the corps’s Southwestern Division in Dallas. Proximity to his parents, who still lived in Mineral Wells, solved the problem of childcare. Charles and Karl completed the move west in mid-October, and the entire family soon relocated to Fort Worth, where Williams outfitted a studio in his parents’ garage.

Fort Worth in 1947 had a more vibrant art scene than many cities its size. It revolved around an institution, the FWAA, and a group of friends, the Fort Worth Circle. The association operated the city’s art museum, a single room built to function as exhibition space, sales outlet, and lecture hall on the second floor of the public library. The librarian, Jennie Scheuber, a vigorous champion of the visual arts as well as books, had been forced to retire in 1938 after directing the institution for nearly forty years.⁴ New leadership included a young banker, Sam Cantey III, and an established oilman, Robert Windfohr, each of whom served multiple terms as board president. The revitalized organization brought in more traveling exhibitions from the American Federation of the Arts, the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA), the Smithsonian, New York galleries, and others. Some caused controversy, such as the 1942 *Contemporary Figure Painting*, which had more than a few nudes.⁵ In 1939, the FWAA inaugurated an exhibition inviting submissions from anyone in Fort Worth, which soon became known as the Local Artists Show, or often simply the Local.⁶ The show was an immediate and lasting success that continued annually for almost four decades.

By the mid-twentieth century, exhibitions like the Local provided the first step on the road to viability for artists in the western United States. A jury of one or more art critics, artists, curators, or teachers decided which submissions merited exhibiting. Sponsors, such as galleries, museum supporters, and local merchants, donated prize money; and the jurors or others, sometimes the general public, assigned awards. The exhibited works were typically also for sale. The exposure and press coverage might catch the eye of a gallerist, who might include an artist in a group show. If that went well, the gallerist might offer a solo show and perhaps a long-term arrangement. New York gallery representation marked the pinnacle of achievement. Museums might also mount a solo show for artists who regularly won recognition. Again, the works would be for sale, probably at higher prices since the artist now had a reputation. Making a living as an artist, however, required devoted patrons and a steady stream of commissions.

The quality of works at the Fort Worth Local in part reflected the community’s investment in art education. In 1924, the public schools for White children added art electives to the high school curriculum to complement compulsory art instruction in grades one through seven.⁷ Sallie Gillespie’s classes at Fort Worth Central High School (later Paschal High School) were particularly well-regarded; her students included Dickson Reeder and Bror Utter. Private instruction was also available, most notably from Christina MacLean and Sallie Blyth Mummert. Mummert taught Bill Bomar, Veronica Helfensteller, and Reeder. In 1932 Gillespie and two other PAFA alumnae, Blanche McVeigh and Evaline Sellors, established the Texas School of the Arts (later the Fort Worth School of Fine Arts); Helfensteller and Utter studied there. The friendships formed in these studios evolved into the Fort Worth Circle.⁸

Among the earliest of the Local's prize winners were Reeder (1941 and 1943) and Utter (1942). After high school, Reeder studied at the Art Students League in New York; in Taxco, Mexico; and in Ireland, London, and Paris, where he met his future wife and fellow artist, Flora Blanc. The Reeders moved back to Fort Worth in 1940.⁹ They reconnected with Utter and with Bomar, who by then lived in New York but returned frequently to his hometown. Kelly Fearing came to Fort Worth in 1943 to work in the defense industry, where he met Reeder and was introduced to the group. Another native, Cynthia Brants, became involved following her graduation from Sarah Lawrence College in 1945. These artists and others shared ideas, criticism, and camaraderie at the Reeders' Saturday evening salons and at weekly sessions in Helfensteller's print studio. Donald Vogel, a newcomer from Chicago who settled in Dallas in 1942, later commented that he found acceptance of his work in Fort Worth that he did not in Dallas.¹⁰ During a period when a group known as the Dallas Nine defined cutting-edge art in Texas—their hard-edged regionalism contrasted sharply with prevailing impressionist styles—the Fort Worth Circle artists took inspiration from cubism, constructivism, surrealism, and other European modernist movements.

The Local helped the Fort Worth Circle artists not only by generating community interest in the arts but also by motivating artists to produce. Fearing remembered, "We waited for opening night with great anticipation, hoping to learn if our work had been accepted, and eager to know who had won awards. . . . Preparing and submitting works for that annual event served as a creative stimulus for all of us."¹¹ As a result of the Local's popularity, the FWAA introduced annual solo shows dedicated to local artists. The first, in 1943, honored Blanche McVeigh. While many artists had day jobs teaching or working in the defense industry, and others had family wealth, the Local and the solo shows that grew out of it provided important sources of sales and income in a city with few commercial galleries.¹² The events also attracted the interest of galleries in New York such as the Weyhe Gallery, which in 1944 hosted works by Blanc, Bomar, Helfensteller, Reeder, Utter, and Vogel in *Six Texas Painters*.

Cantey and Gillespie, who was secretary of the FWAA from 1945 until 1950, created the conditions for the local artists' success, as Fearing described many years later:

“[In Fort Worth] I associated with people who loved the arts, encouraged the artist, and collected their work. . . . [Cantey and] Gillespie organized the annual Local Artists Show and arranged for other art exhibitions that included the best of what was being shown in New York at the time. . . . It is difficult to put into words what a vital and important influence Sam and Sallie had on my development as an artist in those years.”¹³

Gene Owens, who joined the Fort Worth art scene in the late 1950s, described Cantey's passion for local art as one of "missionary zeal."¹⁴ Cantey, in turn, tried to give all the credit to Gillespie, saying, "Gillespie as much as anyone before or since, was responsible for the resurgence of the appreciation of local art."¹⁵

The enthusiasm for art generated by the FWAA and the Fort Worth Circle spread to the city's institutions of higher learning. Texas Christian University (TCU) and Texas Wesleyan College (TWC, later Texas Wesleyan University)

entered the war years with small visual art departments. TCU, from the time it moved to Fort Worth in 1910 until the 1939–40 academic year, had only one faculty member teaching painting and drawing with occasional sessions in sculpture, art education, art history, and related disciplines.¹⁶ TWC's program took a step forward in 1919, when Scheuber convinced the school to hire PAFA alumnus Samuel P. Ziegler.¹⁷ The department consisted of one to two faculty and offered a limited curriculum into the 1940s. Ziegler left for TCU in 1925. From fall 1942 through spring 1945, Gillespie was the sole faculty member in the TWC art department; Fearing took her place until he left for the University of Texas in 1947.¹⁸

Scheuber and Gillespie were two of many women who made invaluable contributions to Fort Worth art, as artists, educators, and in museum leadership.¹⁹ Brants, Gillespie, Helfensteller, McVeigh, Sellors, a painter named Emily Guthrie Smith, and others participated in the Local and regional exhibitions as frequently as the men did, and they consistently won prizes. The Texas General Exhibition was the top event in the state, jointly organized by the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts (DMFA, now the Dallas Museum of Art), the Witte Memorial Museum of San Antonio, and the Museum of Fine Arts of Houston (MFAH). In 1940, all five entries to the Texas General from Fort Worth were by women (the rest of the state-wide field was evenly split between men and women). Between 1945 and 1950, Gillespie effectively directed the FWAA gallery. In 1946, the twenty-two member Art Association board consisted of thirteen women, among them McVeigh as well as Bill Bomar's and Cynthia Brants's mothers, and nine men, including Cantey, Windfohr, and grocery- and grain-baron Kay Kimbell.²⁰ On the other hand, the art world in Fort Worth, as in the rest of the United States, lacked ethnic diversity. Although some of the artists and occasional shows had roots in Latin America, no visitor of Black, Asian, Indigenous, or Hispanic heritage could attend the FWAA's programs or exhibitions until the late 1950s or early 1960s.²¹ Exhibitions, FWAA membership, and artists' salons belonged mostly to people of Northern European heritage.

With a popular exhibition line-up, the Association expanded programming. Fort Worth's Junior League organized regular visits to the galleries for sixth graders, although probably only those from White schools. Sellors and Reeder, among others, taught classes. Open forums where the public could ask questions and high-profile lecturers, such as Guatemalan abstract painter Carlos Mérida in March 1943, drew considerable interest.²² As audiences grew, the space and operational constraints of the library gallery became increasingly frustrating. Supporters lobbied for a bond issue to build a free-standing museum. Although voters approved the initiative in 1945, little had changed by the time Williams arrived in Fort Worth two years later.

SPACES FOR ART

After the cosmopolitanism, energy, and personal freedom of post-war Paris and the trauma of losing his wife and job soon after resuming civilian life, Williams initially struggled to adjust to Fort Worth. Weekdays, he commuted three hours by bus to Dallas to work as a draftsman on water management projects.²³ Evenings and weekends, he



Fig. 4.4 Charles T. Williams, *[Ringmaster marionette]*, ca. 1947, mixed media, 22 x 8 x 4 in., Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Marionettes in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

Masters of Fine Arts (BFA and MFA) degrees. This signaled a professionalization of art education that was also underway elsewhere. The expanded faculty included painter Jack W. Erickson, who arrived at TCU in fall 1947 with a BFA from the University of Illinois.²⁸ Across town, TWC had a new art department head, McKie Trotter III, another painter, who held an MFA from the University of Georgia. Trotter left TWC for TCU in fall 1955. Larger enrollments merited better facilities, and TCU's art department moved, along with music and dance, into a dedicated fine arts building in September 1949 (fig. 4.6).²⁹

continued working with ceramics.²⁴ An unsent letter to Lílá, a Paris girlfriend, expresses his ennui:

“To bring you up-to-date on my situation—can safely say that it's just the same as it was six months ago. I am still in the same old ruts which I have been in for the past year. And what is the more unhappy thought [is that] I don't see any changes to come in the near future.”²⁵

He cast about, applying for a government position abroad. He built marionettes and pitched them to television advertisers, possibly landing interviews, if not actual contracts, with Humble Oil and Pearl Beer (figs. 4.4 and 4.5).²⁶ Experiments with sculpture held more promise. A November 1947 letter from Lílá conveyed her excitement at learning of them: “Your hands— . . . Sculpture is what your hands are made for, what your feelings and the strength of your [whole] body are made for.”²⁷ He did not yet realize it, but Williams had found his calling.

In early 1948, Williams took advantage of the GI Bill and enrolled at TCU. The GI Bill brought students and funds that triggered a period of growth for the TCU art program. With Ziegler still at the head, in 1947–48 the department doubled its faculty to four, and the school introduced Bachelors and



Fig. 4.5 Unknown photographer, *[Charles T. and Anita Williams and friends with marionettes]*, n.d., color photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.



Fig. 4.6 Unknown photographer, *Ed Landreth Hall with auditorium*, 1947, black-and-white photograph, TCU Photo Collection, Special Collections, Mary Coats Burnett Library, Texas Christian University.

Shortly before, in May 1949, Fort Worth suffered a catastrophic flood. In addition to \$12 million in property damage and at least eight people dead, the flood uprooted large black walnut trees in Forest Park.³⁰ Williams salvaged the wood. Once it cured, he had a stock of quality material to work with, though he may still have lacked proficiency handling it. While TCU had no sculptor on the faculty when Williams enrolled, Leonard Logan III, who completed his MFA in sculpture and painting at the University of Oklahoma, joined in fall 1949.³¹ The next year, TCU expanded its art curriculum with classes in modeling, sculptural composition, plastic design, and sculpting in wood and stone; it also introduced a sculpture major.³²

After school one evening, Williams invited his classmate Jack Boynton to the garage studio.³³ Visits to “Charlie’s shop” grew into regular events, and Boynton introduced other TCU students to the gatherings, among them Bob Cunningham, Erv Harrison, and Boynton’s future wife, Ann Williams. New friends notwithstanding, Charles remained restless. In fall 1949, Lílá drafted a budget for him, Karl, and Harrison to live in Paris.³⁴ Williams aptly titled a redwood sculpture from this period *Indecision* (pl. 2). Heavy feet convey impossible-to-overcome inertia, while a giant index finger scratches its tiny head in a familiar gesture of rumination.

As Williams continued pursuing his BFA, sculptures he created from the Forest Park walnut trees gained him entrée to local, state, and regional exhibitions for the first time.³⁵ Between 1949 and 1951, the Texas General and the Local accepted three: *Torso* [#1], *Torso* [#2] (pl. 3), and *Fallen Angel*. Over the next several years, Williams progressed to regional exhibitions, including the New Orleans Art Association show at the Isaac Delgado Museum, the Mid-America Annual in Kansas City, and the Annual Exhibition of Western Art in Denver. He frequently won awards, among them a purchase prize at the 1950 Mid-America Annual for *Torso* [#1].

Williams followed his successes in walnut with a move into stone. Throughout his life, he demonstrated a talent for acquiring sculpting skills with little formal guidance, but his early development closely followed Logan’s arrival at TCU. At the 1949–50 Texas General, for example, Williams submitted only sculptures of wood, while Logan showed a stone sculpture, *Weasel Farm*, and a marble one, *Boar Head*.³⁶ The next year, Williams sent a limestone sculpture to the Local, *Continuum* (pl. 4). The parallels between the two men’s exhibition histories suggest Logan provided mentorship as well as technical knowledge. As Williams progressed, however, he worked out his own way forward, conducting experiments and advancing by trial and error to master processes for which, he said, he had no prototype.³⁷

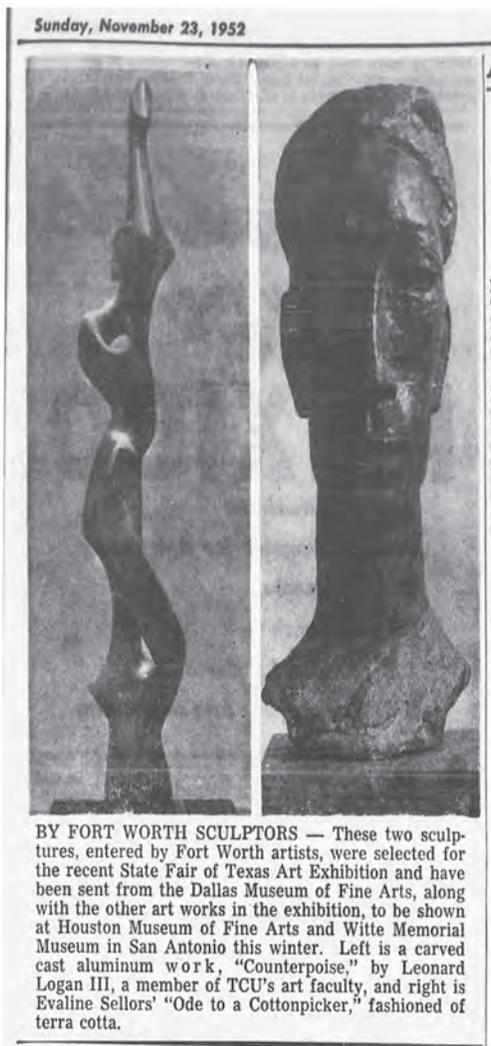


Fig. 4.7 The *Star-Telegram* featured sculptures by Leonard Logan III and Evaline Sellors in a 1952 article about the State Fair of Texas Art Exhibition (*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 23, 1952).

Evaline Sellors also regularly appeared on the same exhibition circuit as Logan and Williams (fig. 4.7). A native of Fort Worth, she trained in sculpture at PAFA and in Europe and taught at the FWAA, the Craft Guild of Dallas, and elsewhere.³⁸ For several years, she and Williams took turns claiming first place at the Local. They provided mutual assistance, as well. Karl Williams remembers frequent errands between the two sculptors' studios to drop off and collect tools and other necessities.³⁹

In the 1951 Local, *Continuum* placed first, taking the Bertram Newhouse award for sculpture. Newhouse began sponsoring awards in various categories in 1947. His relationship with the FWAA dated to at least 1935, when the then Ehrich-Newhouse Gallery loaned an exhibition of old master paintings. Kay and Velma Kimbell made their first significant art purchase, *The Artist's Children*, by Sir William Beechey, from the show. Newhouse oversaw the growth of the Kimbells' collection for nearly three decades. Also in 1935, Amon G. Carter Sr. laid the foundation for his collection, acquiring Frederic Remington's *His First Lesson* from Newhouse.

The FWAA enabled Kimbell and Carter, as well as others, to indulge their passions for art. At the same time, both families provided leadership and other support for the institution. Works from the Kimbells often appeared on the gallery's walls; and Kay and Velma served on the Art Association board for many years. Carter also loaned works, and although he never held a board seat, his ex-wife, Nenetta Burton Carter, and their daughter, Ruth Carter Johnson (later Stevenson) did.⁴⁰

In 1950, Gillespie left the FWAA and moved to Taos. Still seeking a space independent of the library, the association created the role of director and hired Dan Defenbacher from the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis to run the gallery, raise funds, and supervise the design and construction of a new building. Defenbacher arrived in June 1951. Almost immediately, he launched plans for an ambitious show of forty works by new artists, one of the most complex organized by the association to date.⁴¹ According to the catalogue, *Texas Wildcat* presented "a selective nationwide survey" of paintings by "established artists who had not yet attained a nationwide market." It ran in Fort Worth from November 1 to December 31, 1951, then traveled to the DMFA and the San Francisco Museum of Art (now SFMOMA). In spite of the name, only two Texas artists made the cut: Brants and Clara McDonald

Williamson, who had taken up painting in her sixties and produced stylized genre scenes and landscapes. For the San Francisco showing, however, Defenbacher added paintings by Bomar, Boynton, Erickson, Reeder, Trotter, Utter, and others.⁴² *Texas Wildcat* raised the profile of Fort Worth on the West Coast and burnished Defenbacher's reputation, as well.

At home, the director focused on increasing memberships and public interest. He moderated a Saturday afternoon show on WBAP-TV called *Your Art Center of the Air*, for which Brants and the Reeders acted as consultants.⁴³ Defenbacher also established an "artist's subsidiary" membership group at the FWAA, which had a seat on the board and a voice in exhibitions and programming. To belong, an artist needed to have participated in a "necessary" number of "acceptable" juried shows. Its first president was Utter, followed by Trotter, then Williams. Members included Jack and Ann Boynton, Brants, Erickson, Logan, McVeigh, Dickson Reeder, and Sellors.⁴⁴ Meeting minutes in the Williams archive show the group volunteering to organize fundraisers and offer demonstrations; planning a competition for murals and sculpture for the new building; recommending alternative formats, potential jurors, and a simplified award structure for the Local; noting that the gallery would benefit from better art reporting; encouraging the elimination of purchase prizes on the principle that a juror cannot know what makes sense for the permanent collection; and voting down a proposal for an un-juried show for local residents. Most ideas went unheeded, but the members of the artist's subsidiary energetically supported the FWAA and adamantly argued for high standards for its exhibitions.⁴⁵ Although Defenbacher may have organized the group, its enthusiasm and the tenor of its advice suggest Williams was actively working behind the scenes.

In fact, not long after arriving in Fort Worth, Defenbacher became part of Williams's circle of art friends and colleagues. The group had grown as Williams settled into life in Fort Worth. In early 1951, Williams took a leave of absence from the corps to focus on his studies. He graduated with his BFA from TCU a year later. In August 1951, he remarried and gained a stepson. He and Anita McConnell, a teacher, met when Karl was her student. The four of them moved to an old farm southeast of the city. The studio and "Charlie's shop" moved as well, and Anita proved an able and popular co-host. Regular guests included the now-married Boyntons, Cunningham, Erickson and his wife Jane, and Harrison. Trotter, still teaching at TWC, and his wife Sandra joined. As the Fort Worth Circle dispersed—Fearing took a job at the University of Texas in Austin and Helfensteller moved to New Mexico in



Fig. 4.8 Charles T. Williams, *Lava*, 1951, lava stone, 25 x 17 x 11 in., collection of the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, museum purchase, 1952.10. © Karl B. Williams.

the late 1940s—the Reeders, Sellors, and Utter frequented the Williams’s soirees, as did David Brownlow, a self-taught painter who was making a name for himself in the area. Betty McLean (later Blake), who opened Dallas’s first gallery devoted to contemporary art in 1951, made appearances as well. She hired Vogel as gallery manager and, within the year, they organized solo shows for Utter, Fearing, and Bomar. With Trotter tending bar, the group shared strategies, ideas, and diversions like “The Game” that Katie Robinson Edwards describes in her essay.⁴⁶

As in the Fort Worth Circle, the artists in Williams’s orbit worked in a variety of styles and mediums, and several had experienced European modernism firsthand. They supported each other outside of social events. Williams loaned the studio to Trotter for life-drawing classes since nude models were prohibited on TWC’s campus; Trotter’s student Gene Owens met Williams through these sessions.⁴⁷ The artists’ connections led Williams to Taos, where he discovered volcanic rock that he used in several sculptures (fig. 4.8).⁴⁸ Boynton, Erickson, Trotter, and Williams showed together at numerous exhibitions and galleries, such as Lon Hellums’s gallery in April 1950 and *Three Painters and a Sculptor* at the FWAA in September 1952. Around this time, Williams began welding, assembling steel rods and plates into compositions that echoed some of Utter’s works in watercolor and oil (pls. 7 and 8).

When Guggenheim Museum curator James Johnson Sweeney scouted North Texas for an upcoming show, he consulted McLean. Defenbacher convinced Sweeney to consider a trio of artists from his side of town. Since Defenbacher had no loyalties to the Fort Worth Circle generation of Bomar, Reeder, and Utter, he happily promoted the artists coming out of TCU. In 1954, Boynton, Erickson, and Trotter represented Texas in the Guggenheim Museum’s *Younger American Painters* exhibition, sharing space with artists like Richard Diebenkorn, Philip Guston, and Jackson Pollock.⁴⁹

Defenbacher’s most lasting contribution, however, was to complete the fundraising and organizing needed to build a home for the FWAA. The new facility would house a growing permanent collection and host exhibitions and programs, including films, theater, and musical performances. Ruth Carter Stevenson recalled meeting in 1951 to decide on an architect with her then-husband, lawyer J. Lee Johnson III; Sam and Betsy Cantey; and Bob Windfohr and his wife Anne, who was a ranching and oil heir. Unhappy with the city’s recommendation, the historic revivalist Wiley Clarkson, they instead selected Bauhaus-trained Herbert Bayer.⁵⁰ It is hard to imagine such a choice would have been possible without the embrace of modernism by the Fort Worth



Fig. 4.9 John A. Stryker, *Main Entrance and Sculpture Patio*, Fort Worth Art Center, ca. 1954, color photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, in Postcards, Fort Worth History Collection.



Fig. 4.10 Members Lounge at new Fort Worth Art Center building; color scheme of orange, blue, and green, September 30, 1954, courtesy Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

Circle and their successors. The building opened on October 8, 1954, with an updated designation: the Fort Worth Art Center (FWAC) (figs. 4.9 and 4.10). Defenbacher, however, did not stay to direct the center; in May he had taken the job of president at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland. Henry Caldwell, formerly of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, assumed the top post at the FWAA the following April.



Fig. 4.11 Ted and Lucile Weiner’s house in installation view of the exhibition *Built in U.S.A.: Post-War Architecture*, January 20–March 15, 1953, photographic archive, The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York. Digital image © The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY.



Fig. 4.12 [Charles T. Williams], [*Texas Crude Oil Company, with fountain and facade decorations by Williams*], ca. 1959, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

Judging from correspondence in the archive, Williams and others bemoaned Defenbacher’s departure. “The artists really feel your absence around here,” Williams wrote, “those which are left, that is. The Artist Group is still hanging on in spite of a movement to disband.”⁵¹ An earlier letter from Defenbacher indicates that he may have provided a boost to sculpture in particular, “Sculpture out here is at about the same level as it is everywhere. It needs promotion and we are working on it.”⁵² Sculptors face challenges that painters do not encounter. Painters can easily enter contests and exhibitions since canvases photograph relatively well and ship readily. A wall suffices for display. With sculptures, on the other hand, even photos from multiple angles fail to capture the entire viewing experience or their materiality. They can be heavy and difficult to transport, requiring bulky crates and special handling. Display often requires a pedestal and ample floor space.

Cantey remarked on the paucity of sculptors in Fort Worth on the occasion of a 1963 show at Neiman Marcus in the Square, noting, “Sculptors are still rare in Fort Worth but those we have are good and we have more than we used to have.”⁵³ At the 1956 Texas General, juror Francis Henry Taylor humiliated the area’s sculptors in his comments: “The strength of the Exhibition lies in the paintings. The sculpture was not of the same high order and for this reason no sculpture was considered . . . for a cash award. . . . Except for the sculpture, the exhibition is one which ranks highly.”⁵⁴ Dallas sculptor Octavio Medellin’s wood *Joan of Arc*, Gene Owens’s bronze *Dog Barking at Moon*, Sellors’s wood *Saltamontes*, and Williams’s steel *Vertical Figures* were among the sculptures Taylor found inadequate. The *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* reacted,

“Is sculpture, long art’s stepchild in Texas, being kicked back to the scullery again after a brief fling as Cinderella?”⁵⁵ Some considered withdrawing their works from the exhibition.⁵⁶

Fortunately for Williams, by this time he had steady patrons in oilman Ted Weiner and his wife Lucile. They



Fig. 4.13 Carol R. Fraser, [*Charles T. Williams's fountain at Ridglea Country Club*], ca. 1954, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Carol R. Fraser.

probably met through the FWAA.⁵⁷ The Weiners, with Defenbacher's help, built the first International Style house in the region, designed by Edward Larrabee Barnes, a student of Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer (fig. 4.11).⁵⁸ With the completion of the house and its six-and-a-half acre garden in 1954, the Weiners started collecting modern sculpture in earnest. Along with works by Jean Arp, Harry Bertoia, Alexander Calder, Henri Laurens, Jacques Lipchitz, Henry Moore, Alicia Penalba, and Pablo Picasso, the Weiners acquired a number of works by Williams, including commissions for a large fountain for the garden and a fountain and sculptures for Ted's offices at the Texas Crude Oil Company (fig. 4.12).⁵⁹

Williams's association with the Weiners encompassed building pedestals for their collection and repairing damaged works.⁶⁰ It also led to other projects, such as three sculptures for the Ridglea Country Club: *Odalisque* for the cocktail bar (pl. 9), a fountain for the entryway (fig. 4.13), and a golfing figure for the men's grill. The Weiner fountain and the country club commissions show the artist working on a much larger scale and mastering still more materials and techniques, such as hammered bronze and copper.⁶¹ The fountains required an appreciation for plumbing and armatures sufficient to sustain the weight of metal and water. Williams took inspiration from Asian calligraphy for the Weiner fountain; he detailed the design process and technical challenges in his MFA thesis (pl. 11).⁶²

In August 1955, Williams received his MFA from TCU in absentia. He had suffered a heart attack several weeks earlier and was still recovering. At this point, he realized he had to make a choice. He could no longer continue holding down a full-time job and pursuing the creative life all night. With his recent commissions, he felt he could make it as an artist. He resigned from his job at the corps in September and devoted himself to sculpture.

A CASE FOR ART

In October 1955, Williams addressed the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects, arguing that sculpture humanizes architecture and should not be neglected in building design. He considered two installations of Bertoia's work outstanding examples of the practice, one at the Manufacturers Trust Company building by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, and the other at the General Motors Technical Center designed by



Fig. 4.14 Balthazar Korab (1926–2013), *General Motors Technical Center, Warren, Michigan, Cafeteria Interior [screen by Harry Bertoia (1953)]*, 1949–56, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC, LC-DIG-krb-00131. © 2022 Estate of Harry Bertoia / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.



Fig. 4.15 Charles T. Williams, *Bronze Door Push*, 1959, cast bronze, 6 3/8 x 23 1/2 x 1 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Karl B. Williams.

Eero Saarinen & Associates (fig. 4.14).⁶³ Either Williams made a compelling presentation or had a receptive audience. He earned steady commissions for functional yet ornamental building components into the 1960s, from door pushes for All Saints Hospital (fig. 4.15) to light fixtures for the American Bank of Commerce in Odessa to a stair railing for Tarrant County Savings and Loan.⁶⁴ The city of Dallas put Williams on the short list for a monument at Love Field Airport, but he did not make the finals (nor did Logan or Medellín).⁶⁵ Charles Umlauf, a sculptor and professor at the University of Texas, ultimately won the commission.⁶⁶

The FWAC granted Williams a solo show in late 1957. The director’s catalogue introduction commends Williams’s bravura, even with difficult materials, noting, “He is completely the master of his medium.”⁶⁷ The show comprised six models and forty-two sculptures, from wood and stone carvings, through steel rod and plate welded constructions, and works of hammered brass and steel, to Williams’s first forays into bronze casting.

In truth, at the time of the FWAC show, Williams had only begun taking on technical challenges. Sometime after, he acquired a heliarc welder, a finicky tool that created aircraft-quality seams and could fuse nonferrous metals, and overhead handling equipment, which enabled him to take on ever-larger projects.⁶⁸ Exploiting a variety of equipment and materials, he investigated all aspects of twentieth-century abstraction, staying abreast of developments through his friends, travel, and art publications.⁶⁹ He ventured into found objects not long after assemblages and their evocations of entropy emerged on the West Coast (pl. 16). Torn-wax sculptures documented Happenings, as visitors to the studio ripped up sheets of wax and assembled them into forms that Williams later transferred to bronze (pl. 14). A 1964 lead piece resulted from a chance-driven deformation process. In the mid-60s he experimented with steel H beam and cold-rolled steel constructions (pl. 25 and see fig. 3.18). To these he added color and shine with automotive paints and coating processes, possibly responding to another West Coast craze, Finish Fetish.⁷⁰ Unlike many sculptors, Williams rarely



Fig. 4.16 Unknown photographer, [Charles T. Williams with his chainsaw sculpture *Beach Log*], ca. 1964, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.



Fig. 4.17 Charles T. Williams of Fort Worth poses near one unit of [his Heritage of the Great Southwest,] a series which has been installed in the Fort Worth Art Center, March 3, 1963, courtesy Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

outsourced production.⁷¹ He upheld his standards even using equipment designed for speed and power over accuracy, provoking Vogel to observe, “As a craftsman, he had no peer. . . . Even when he sculpted with a chainsaw, it was with flawless precision” (fig. 4.16).⁷²

Williams continued to participate in shows at the FWAC, although he did not have a warm relationship with Caldwell, and he seems to have actively disliked Caldwell’s successor, Raymond Entenmann, who was hired from PAFA in 1960. Boynton received a letter from Williams that must have expressed some frustration and replied, “How can Entenmann be worse than poor old Caldwell? I’m having trouble imagining. Actually the F.W. Art Center died some years ago and you ought to expect it to be stinking a bit by now.”⁷³

Neither Entenmann nor Caldwell altered the FWAC exhibition practices, relying even more heavily on traveling shows to fill the spacious new building and interspersing them with periodic permanent collection, local collector, and local artist shows. Williams appeared in *Sculptors of Texas* in 1957 and featured prominently in a 1959 presentation of the Weiner collection. Works by Williams, Owens, and Medellín supplemented a 1961 show from MoMA on modern church architecture. In 1963, Williams installed elements of his large-scale *Heritage of the Great Southwest* series in the Art Center garden (fig. 4.17). On the other hand, Williams cut back on the time he offered the FWAC for demonstrations and committee work, and the artist’s subsidiary disbanded around 1957.

Fort Worth’s women artists remained a force at the Art Center. The juror for the 1960 Local, Walter Stuempfig of PAFA, was “impressed ‘by the extraordinary number of women painters in Fort Worth, and how good they are.’ . . . Usually, he explained, men painters are far better both in inspiration and execution than are women,” the *Star-Telegram* reported.⁷⁴ Stuempfig did not comment on the sculptors. The FWAC made small advances in ethnic diversity. *Sculptors of Texas* consisted mostly of Houston artists and included Carroll H. Simms, a Black artist on the faculty of Texas Southern University. In 1962 the Art Center devoted a solo show to a Black artist for the first time with *Illustrations by John Biggers*, also a faculty member at Texas Southern. Beyond the walls of the Art Center, Japanese-American sculptor Isamu Noguchi made contemporary art part of the Fort Worth landscape when he installed the plaza of the new First National Bank building in 1960.

Under Caldwell, the FWAC expanded its class schedule and added instructors. Emily Guthrie Smith, Sellors, Trotter, and Utter formed a reliable core, while others came and went. In 1958 the center hired John Chumley, a realist painter from Tennessee, as its first non-local teacher.⁷⁵ In retrospect, the appointment was an early sign of the center’s fading enthusiasm for local artists. TCU’s art department prospered and by 1962 numbered seven faculty. When Logan left in 1960, however, the department did not replace his expertise in sculpture, and sculpture

courses merged with crafts and ceramics.⁷⁶ An aspiring sculptor attended Sellors's classes at the FWAC or visited Williams's studio.

For experimentation and teaching advanced technique, Williams had no equal. After Gene Owens returned to Fort Worth with his MFA from the University of Georgia, he and Williams engaged in intensive study of the largely forgotten arts of sand and lost wax casting. In 1961 they set up a burnout kiln at Southwestern Brass Foundry in Fort Worth.⁷⁷ Casting at Southwestern was a communal activity in which Sellors participated as did a new TCU BFA graduate, Ed Storms.⁷⁸ Two recent arrivals to the area, painters Roger Winter and Joe Ferrell Hobbs, worked for Williams as studio assistants.⁷⁹ Fellow artists deeply appreciated Williams's encouragement. Vogel commented, "No one was more generous than Charles Williams in helping a friend or a young sculptor solve a problem or teach them how to cast their work. I have known him to drop his tools and go to the foundry and cast another's work to teach him the process, never asking anything in return."⁸⁰ Boynton and Owens expressed similar sentiments.⁸¹

In 1957, Williams, along with Brownlow, Trotter, Utter, and a number of other area artists established the DFW Men of Art Guild (MoAG). Modeled on a similar cooperative in San Antonio, it aspired to provide mutual support and sponsor shows and awards to foster quality. In the fall, MoAG opened a space in Dallas, one of a growing number of contemporary art galleries in the area. The oil and Cold War defense industries drove prosperity, and museum exhibitions and sales had demonstrated the strength of the market. In 1959 in Fort Worth alone, Pauline Evans and Utter established Fifth Avenue Gallery, showing Williams and his peers as well as members of the Fort Worth Circle; the Weiners opened the Gallery of Modern Art, offering works by European artists; and Robert and Nancy Ellison inaugurated Ellison Gallery, concentrating on abstract expressionism. Electra Carlin refocused an existing operation and named it Carlin Galleries in 1960.

In Dallas, galleries for contemporary art remained rare through the early 1960s. McLean Gallery closed in 1954 following Betty's divorce from Jock McLean and marriage to Tom Blake Jr.⁸² Vogel inherited McLean's list of artists and in April 1955 opened Valley House Gallery. He worked with Joe Lambert, a Louisiana transplant who built a spectacularly successful landscape design business, to transform the gallery's five acres in North Dallas into a garden suitable for a sculpture show; the inaugural took place in May 1960.⁸³ Williams appeared regularly at the Spring Sculpture Shows, again alongside names like Moore and Picasso. *Artforum's* review of the 1962 exhibition noted, "The most impressive pieces are by Fort Worth's Charles Williams, who has upended a huge slab of granite and topped it with a balancing rock even huger and for a potent spell of mysterious playfulness."⁸⁴

Lambert became a champion of Williams, sponsoring a trip to Europe for Charles and Anita in 1963. He also offered to fund a move to New York City, still the epicenter of contemporary art. Williams declined.⁸⁵ He explained to Karl:

“If I were in the New York market—which is the only place I could really become a recognized sculptor—I would be deep in [a] political rat race. I just refuse to play and remain here where I will never be able to be anything but a third rate sculptor. It is true that I enjoy my seclusion and

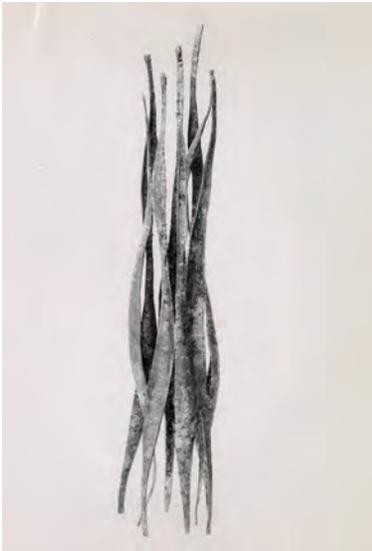


Fig. 4.18 Sculpture titled “Eight” by Charles T. Williams. The sculpture is made of steel with brass coating, April 1966, courtesy Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries, Photo by Maurice Miller.

*the easy pace, but there are dark moments when I feel that I haven't given my all—that I have failed myself, my profession and my art by simply being afraid of that bitter stuff called failure.*⁸⁶

The “dark moments” may have been aggravated by Williams’s second severe heart attack, in late 1960. Williams’s eminence in the Texas art world and bustling commission business did not shield him from punishing self-critique.

Though he turned down New York, Williams’s exhibitions and commissions during this era expanded beyond Fort Worth to Dallas and Houston, as, in general, the ties between the cities’ art worlds grew closer. He added patrons in Dallas, such as high-end retail magnate Stanley Marcus and oil heirs John and Lupe Murchison.⁸⁷ When Boynton took a job at the University of Houston in 1955, he provided introductions for Williams in that city. The next year, Williams won the only sculpture prize at the Gulf-Caribbean Exhibition at the MFAH with *Eight* (fig. 4.18), a work whose forms echo in some Boynton canvases of the period, such as *Aftermath* (fig. 4.19). At the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, director Jermyne MacAgy featured Williams’s work

and Boynton’s in *Pacemakers* in 1957. In the events surrounding the exhibition, Boynton introduced Williams to sculptor Jim Love. They became scavenging partners, frequenting Gachman Metals, a Fort Worth recycling yard, in pursuit of future assemblages.⁸⁸ Love later introduced Williams to filmmaker Roy Fridge and painter David McManaway, who joined the scrap metal hunt. Between 1958 and 1962, Houston’s New Arts Gallery gave Williams two solo shows; MacAgy’s groundbreaking *Totems Not Taboo* exhibition inspired Williams’s *Ancient Warrior*, which won first prize at the Texas General (fig. 4.20); and Houston’s new Sheraton Hotel commissioned a screen and fountain.

In 1957, the DFW Turnpike opened (now I-30 from downtown Dallas to Oakland Boulevard in Fort Worth), and a motorist could “breeze 30 miles through picturesque countryside” between the urban centers.⁸⁹ For the operations building halfway between, Williams and Medellín, each city’s best-known modernist sculptor, collaborated on a mosaic that, somewhat ironically, humanized a space dedicated to the latest in high-speed ground transportation technology. The two men had known each other for several years and in 1956–57 jointly contributed to the interior of Temple Emanu-El in Dallas. They became such good friends that they and their



Fig. 4.19 James Boynton (1928–2010), *Aftermath*, 1956–57, oil and sand on canvas, 60 x 33 3/4 in., Whitney Museum of American Art, purchase, with funds from the Allade Foundation, Inc., 58.35. © The Estate of James Boynton.



Fig. 4.20 Charles T. Williams, *Ancient Warrior*, 1962, found objects, welded steel, 68 x 20 x 15 in., collection of the San Antonio Art League.
© Karl B. Williams.

wives took a road trip in the summer of 1959 through Texas and Mexico to Antigua, Guatemala.

Williams's interest in ancient Mesoamerican cultures, particularly the Maya, undoubtedly informed the itinerary. During the 1960s, he made several trips to archeological sites in Mexico with Doc Keen, a local veterinarian and stunt pilot. In the archive, a manuscript of uncertain date documents considerable research into Maya art and architecture, especially techniques for sculpting in jade. He observed, "The Ancient Maya had no metal tools [making] their complete mastery of jade-carving an outstanding technical achievement."⁹⁰ In 1958 Williams received a block of Wyoming jade courtesy of New York gallerist Victor Hammer. He may have hoped to try his hand at carving in the manner of the Maya, but he never produced anything with it. The Weiners' collection contained pre-Hispanic objects that may have sparked Williams's curiosity, though museums and galleries in the area routinely exhibited similar works, much of it probably looted.

The 1959 road trip occasioned a derisive anecdote in Medellín's memoirs in which Williams mistook a Chac Mool figure for a sculpture by Moore.⁹¹

Williams's manuscript, however, almost certainly pre-dates the trip and includes a half-page discussion of the Chac Mool; he would not have mis-identified the maker.⁹² Whether prompted by Moore or the Maya, Williams's massive 1958 *Earth Mother*, created for the Weiner garden, owes a clear debt to the form (fig. 4.21 and pl. 13).⁹³ Nevertheless, the story reflects an underlying tension in the relationship between Williams and Medellín. During lunches, Karl reported, the two artists engaged in machismo-driven competitive hot-pepper consumption, the goal being to show no outward sign of discomfort. The challenges of travel through Texas and Mexico, particularly for a darker-skinned Otomí descendent like Medellín in the company of lighter-skinned Anglos, may have proved a strain. In any event, according to Karl, the friendship never fully recovered, much to the Williamses' dismay.⁹⁴

At the time of the trip, Medellín worked for the DMFA, around which Dallas's relatively conservative art scene revolved.⁹⁵ After a controversy there over "communist art," a group seeking an outlet for avant-garde work opened the Dallas Museum for Contemporary Arts (DMCA) in 1957.⁹⁶ Boynton, McManaway, Williams, and others were frequent visitors and sometime exhibitors. When the DMCA hosted MoMA's *Art of Assemblage*,



Fig. 4.21 Unknown artist(s) (Mexico, Maya culture), *Chac Mool*, 800-1200 A.D., stone, Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, Mexico, image by Ziko van Dijk.

director Douglas MacAgy (Jermyne's ex-husband), added works by McManaway and Fridge to the show, which already included work by Love.⁹⁷ McManaway joined Williams and abstract painter Toni LaSelle in *Three Texas Artists* shortly before the DMCA merged with the DMFA in 1963.



Fig. 4.22 Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Philip Johnson (1906–2005), architect.

On the other end of the turnpike, in 1961 the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art (ACMWA) opened (fig. 4.22). When Amon G. Carter Sr. died six years earlier, his will provided funds for a museum to showcase his collection of works by Remington and Charles Russell “for the benefit of the public of Fort Worth and Texas.”⁹⁸ Ruth Carter Johnson headed the effort. After rejecting architect Joseph Pelich, who had designed buildings for her father, and FWAC designer Herbert Bayer, she met Philip Johnson at a party in Houston. Ruth already knew of Johnson’s reputation, and a visit to his recent work on the University of St. Thomas campus

led to an invitation to Fort Worth.⁹⁹ Philip Johnson designed the building for a site overlooking downtown and across the street from the Fort Worth Art Center. Jermyne MacAgy organized the opening exhibition and wrote the catalogue. Ruth’s brother, Amon G. Carter Jr., ran the *Star-Telegram* as well as radio and TV stations, and the opening received extensive and highly complimentary media coverage. Until Mitchell A. Wilder arrived later in the year, the FWAC’s Entenmann also served in an administrative role for the ACMWA. Wilder quickly expanded the Carter beyond Russells and Remingtons, and by the middle of the decade, it exhibited contemporary artists alongside its western collection.

In 1964, Kay Kimbell died, setting in motion the creation of the Kimbell Art Museum just down the hill from the ACMWA. Like Carter, Kimbell got his start collecting art through the FWAA. The people leading the two new institutions, including Nenetta Burton Carter, Ruth Carter Johnson, Kay and Velma Kimbell and his niece Kay Fortson, helped guide the FWAA and learned as it grew from a library gallery to a stand-alone museum. That evolution owed some part to the contributions of Williams and his circle.

A LEGACY OF ART

Williams’s third serious heart attack, in March 1966, proved fatal. He is buried in Wichita, Kansas, next to Louise. Fort Worth remembers him with a handful of his sculptures in public and private collections.

A more enduring legacy, however, resulted from Williams's long-time promotion of artistic excellence and cooperation. Up-and-coming artists in Fort Worth found an infrastructure of classes and community to support their development, make introductions, and promote sales. Scott and Stuart Gentling, for example, took art classes at the FWAC. Instructor Emily Guthrie Smith showed Scott's work to a visiting artist, who secured an invitation for Scott to study at PAFA. Scott had a solo show in the Art Center Members Lounge in 1964. Anne Windfohr brought the young man to the attention of Vogel, who gave Scott a solo show in March 1966. Stuart's career followed Scott's, albeit on a slightly different path.¹⁰⁰ The advocacy of Williams, and of the Fort Worth Circle artists before him, helped build and sustain the institutions that launched the Gentlings' and others' careers.



Fig. 4.23 Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas; constructed 1969–72, view from the southwest with Henry Moore's *Figure in a Shelter* (1983), Louis I. Kahn (1901–1974), architect, photograph: Robert LaPrelle. © 2022 Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth.

In spring 1965, a friend of the Gentlings named James J. Meeker, whose father Julian had commissioned sculptures from Williams, wrote an article for the *Star-Telegram* on the opening of a new building for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). He called LACMA's director, Richard F. Brown, "one of the most accomplished art museum directors in the United States."¹⁰¹ By the end of the year, the Kimbell Art Foundation had hired Brown as director. Brown arrived in Fort Worth in early 1966 and immediately went to work on a building for the Kimbell collection. After considering both Philip Johnson and Edward Larrabee Barnes, by late spring he was in conversations with Louis Kahn. The Kimbell Art Museum opened October 4, 1972 (fig. 4.23).¹⁰²

At the FWAC, Entenmann resigned in 1966. Although his replacement, Donald Burrows, stayed only two years, he added Picasso's *Femme couchée lisant (Reclining Woman Reading)* to the permanent collection by outbidding suitors from London, New York, and Los Angeles during the first internationally televised art auction.¹⁰³ Burrows's successor, Henry T. Hopkins, a curator from LACMA, took over in June 1968. Under Hopkins, exhibitions and programs at the FWAC mirrored the national fascination with abstract expressionist, pop, and conceptual art, and artists like Robert Irwin, Robert Rauschenberg, and Ed Ruscha made regular appearances on the Fort Worth art scene. In 1970, Hopkins organized the US Pavilion at the 35th Venice Biennale, jointly sponsored by the FWAA and the Smithsonian.¹⁰⁴

While the Biennale and Picasso purchase raised international awareness of Fort Worth and its Art Center, attention to hometown artists waned. The last of the annual solo shows for a Fort Worth artist took place in October 1966 and featured Emily Guthrie Smith's work. The Local continued until the mid-1970s. Based on the Local's successful proof-of-concept, private galleries entered the business.¹⁰⁵ They eventually supplanted the Art Center's event altogether.



Fig. 4.24 Lee Angle, [*Charles T. Williams with mallet and chisel*], ca. 1957, black-and-white photograph. Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Lee Angle.

The shift away from local talent coincided with a decline in presentation of work by women artists. Group shows still included women in reasonable numbers. The share of “one-man” shows devoted to women, however, plummeted.¹⁰⁶ In the 1940s and early 1950s, half of the FWAC’s infrequent solo shows went to female artists. As the Center mounted more solo exhibitions, fewer and fewer went to women: between 1957 and 1967, women received about one of every six solo exhibitions, and only three had solo shows during the entire decade of the 1970s, with none from 1974 to 1979.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, most of the solo exhibitions at the ACMWA and the Kimbell Museum went to men, although the Carter organized a Georgia O’Keeffe retrospective and an exhibition of Clara MacDonald Williamson’s works in 1966 and nine solo shows of works by woman photographers between 1966 and 1978, including Dorothea Lange, Laura Gilpin, and Barbara Morgan.¹⁰⁸

The drop at the FWAC happened despite having a board of directors that was more than half women, among them the formidable Anne Burnett Tandy (formerly Windfohr) and her daughter Anne Windfohr Meeker (later Marion), as well as Velma Kimbell and Kay Fortson. Betty Guiberson (formerly McLean) served on the Art Association’s advisory board. Kimbell and Fortson also played important roles at the Kimbell Foundation. Ruth Carter Johnson, the visionary behind the Amon G. Carter Foundation and the ACMWA, represented the City Art Commission at the FWAA.¹⁰⁹

A 1967 press release from the Amon Carter Museum announced it would no longer limit itself to western art but expand its mission to encompass the entire United States, arguing that “to understand the West the East also must be studied.”¹¹⁰ The three art museums, whose directors had known each other in Los Angeles and whose board members had years of shared history, soon agreed on boundaries to avoid competing for exhibitions or acquisitions: The FWAC focused on art of the twentieth century regardless of geography, while the other two museums divided pre-twentieth century art between them along geographic lines, the ACMWA concentrating on American art and the Kimbell on art outside of North America.¹¹¹

The spirit of cooperation, however, did not prevent the loss of an unfortunate number of mid-century works. The Williams/Medellín mosaic at the Turnpike operations center fell to a bulldozer, and Noguchi’s installation at the

First National Bank was largely dismantled. Williams's door pulls for All Saints Hospital disappeared during a renovation.¹¹² Most of the Weiners' sculpture collection went to Palm Springs when the city of Fort Worth failed to take action to acquire the garden. *Earth Mother* now resides on the campus of the University of North Texas in Denton.

A close-up of Charles T. Williams manipulating a mallet and chisel graced the catalogue cover for his solo show at the FWAC in 1957, but he had a hand in shaping more than wood, stone, and metal (fig. 4.24). Sharing materials and expertise, he formed artists and others who passed through his studio. Working behind the scenes, he connected people and ideas to leave a distinctive impression on the modernist impulse in Fort Worth.

NOTES

1. Hardin-Simmons University, *The Bronco, Yearbook of Hardin-Simmons University* (Abilene, TX: Hardin-Simmons University, 1941), texashistory.unt.edu.
2. He also completed non-commissioned officer and carpentry training there.
3. R.S. Walsh Jr., Chief, Personnel Branch, to Charles T. Williams, August 7, 1947, in Army Corps of Engineers Records [3] folder, Charles Truett Williams Papers, Amon Carter Museum of American Art (hereinafter, "ACMAA Williams Papers").
4. "Forced Retirement of Librarian Is Indicated," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 15, 1938, 1, 4.
5. Reba Oglesby, "History of the Fort Worth Art Association" (Master's Thesis, Texas State College for Women, 1950), 124.
6. Confusingly, the FWAA used the 1940 show as the starting point for numbering subsequent Local exhibitions, although the *Star-Telegram* called the 1939 show "the first annual" and the 1940 show the "second annual." (Ida Belle Hicks, "Art Prize Winners Announced," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 4, 1939, 20; and "First Prize Winner in Local Artists Show" (photo caption), *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 8, 1940, 9).
7. Pauline Naylor, "Public School Art Work to Be Shown," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 24, 1929, 7. The report did not discuss curricula for Black schools.
8. Scott Grant Barker, "An Unconventional Vision: Remembering the Fort Worth Circle," in *Intimate Modernism: Fort Worth Circle Artists in the 1940s* (exhibition catalogue), ed. Jane Myers (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum, 2008), 12-13; Kendall Curlee, "Helfensteller, Veronica," Texas State Historical Association, June 11, 2020, www.tshaonline.org. See also the artists' biographies in *Intimate Modernism*, 184-94.
9. Kendall Curlee, "Reeder, Edward Dickson," Texas State Historical Association, June 1, 1995, www.tshaonline.org.
10. Donald S. Vogel, *Memories and Images: The World of Donald Vogel and Valley House Gallery* (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 2000), 57-60.
11. William Kelly Fearing, "Memories and Reflections of People and Artists, Events, Actions and Happenings, during My Days and Nights as an Artist in Fort Worth, Texas 1943-1947," in *First Light: Local Art and the Fort Worth Public Library 1901-1961* (exhibition catalogue) (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Public Library, 2001), vi.
12. The Artists Guild provided a sales outlet until it closed in 1939. Other venues included Bandy's, and Collins and Dow frame shops. Various artists' clubs also held periodic exhibitions and sales (Scott Grant Barker, "New Deal Entrepreneurs: The Fort Worth Artists Guild Opens a Gallery," in *Planned, Organized and Established: Houston Artist Cooperatives in the 1930s* (exhibition catalogue) (San Angelo, TX: Center for the Advancement and Study of Early Texas Art, 2017), 26-29; Ibbie Bryan, "Art Notes," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 7, 1936, 27).
13. Fearing, "Memories and Reflections."
14. Katie Robinson Edwards, "Gene Owens Oral History Transcript" (unpublished manuscript), 2008, 43.
15. Sam Cantey III, "Fort Worth," in *Texas Painting & Sculpture: The 20th Century* (exhibition catalogue) (Dallas, San Antonio, Austin, Fort Worth, and Lubbock: Pollock Galleries, San Antonio Museum Association, University Art Museum, Amon Carter Museum, The Museum, 1971), 21.
16. Leon Wilson, "The History of the TCU Art Department Through 1969" (MFA Thesis, Texas Christian University, 1970), 46-116, TCU Art History Department Archives.
17. Wilson, 85; Texas Woman's College, TXWOCO, *Yearbook of Texas Woman's College* (Fort Worth: Texas Woman's College, 1920), 12, texashistory.unt.edu. Wilson says Ziegler joined TWC in 1917 based on an interview with Ziegler in 1966. TWC was Texas Woman's College until 1935.
18. Texas Wesleyan College, *TWECO, Yearbook of Texas Wesleyan College* (Fort Worth: Texas Wesleyan College, 1943), texashistory.unt.edu. See also the yearbooks for 1944-1947.
19. Reflecting the practice of the era, this essay refers to "men" and "women," understanding that to do so overlooks many nuances of gender identity and sexual orientation. "Black," "White," and other terms related to ethnic heritage similarly elide fascinating complexities of culture and experience that are unfortunately beyond the scope of this discussion.
20. "Fort Worth Art Association Leaders Named," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 6, 1946, 2.

21. Richard F. Selcer, *A History of Fort Worth in Black & White: 165 Years of African-American Life* (Denton, TX: UNT Press, 2015), 452, 475. A full understanding of segregation and integration of the library and art association requires further research. Some civic facilities were open to non-Whites on select days. In September 1929, when the National Association of Negro Musicians held a conference in Fort Worth, Scheuber gave the group a tour of an art exhibition at the library. In 1963, an American Library Association report on library desegregation held that “Fort Worth [has] equal facilities.” (“J. Wesley Jones Re-elected,” *Chicago Defender*, September 7, 1929, 2, and “Integrated Libraries,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, January 14, 1963, 12.) A Black person was appointed to the library board in 1961, by which time, Selcer notes, the library department “had been quietly integrating for several years.”
22. Oglesby, “History of the FWAA,” 99–101.
23. “Application for Federal Employment,” June 7, 1948, 1, in Army Corps of Engineers Records [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers; Katie Robinson Edwards, “Jack Boynton Oral History Transcript” (unpublished manuscript), 2007, 4; Lilá [Ménard] to [Charles T. Williams], November 9, 1947, 4, in Correspondence - Lila [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
24. Lilá [Ménard] to [Charles T. Williams], October 5, 1947, 2, in Correspondence - Lila [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
25. [Charles T. Williams] to Lilá [Ménard] (draft letter), September 17, 1948, in Manuscript - Puppet Show folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
26. Charles T. Williams, “[Script for Humble Oil commercial]” and “[Script for Pearl Beer commercial],” both [ca. 1948] in Manuscript - Puppet Show folder, ACMAA Williams Papers; Charles to Lilá, September 17, 1948.
27. Lilá [Ménard] to [Charles T. Williams], November 4, 1947, in Correspondence - Lila [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
28. Scott Grant Barker, “John Wilbur Erickson” (unpublished manuscript), 2022, 1.
29. Texas Christian University, “Fine Arts Building and Auditorium” (press release), September 9, 1949, repository.tcu.edu. The auditorium was dedicated to Ed Landreth shortly after the building opened. Later, the entire building became Ed Landreth Hall.
30. “Drowning Death Toll Brought to 8” and “Estimates Set \$12,000,000 Flood Damage,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 18, 1949, 1.
31. Wilson, “History of TCU Art Department,” 156–57.
32. Wilson, 137–38.
33. Robinson Edwards, “Boynton Oral History,” 4.
34. Lilá [Ménard] to [Charles T. Williams], September 13, 1949, in Correspondence - Lila [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
35. “Forest Park Tree Award-Winning Carving Now,” [Possibly *Fort Worth Press*], [October 1950], clipping in microfilm reel 1800, Charles T. Williams Papers, 1949–1966, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution (hereinafter, “AAA Williams Papers”).
36. *Eleventh Annual Texas Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture* (exhibition catalogue) (Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio: Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Witte Memorial Museum, 1949–50), texashistory.unt.edu.
37. Charles T. Williams, “The Design and Execution of a Fountain Sculpture” (MFA Thesis, Texas Christian University, 1955), 26. Logan was not among the faculty members who approved Williams’s thesis.
38. Scott Grant Barker, “Sellors, Evaline Clarke,” Texas State Historical Association, February 8, 2022, www.tshaonline.org.
39. Karl Williams, conversation with the author, April 12, 2022.
40. “FWAA Leaders Named,” 2; Nedra Jenkins, “Art Association Hears Gloomy Financial Report,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 4, 1954, 7; *20th Century Paintings* (exhibition catalogue) (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Association, 1966).
41. Nedra Jenkins, “Art Association Will Present ‘Wildcat’ Show,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, August 26, 1951, 44.
42. *Texas Wildcat* (exhibition catalogue) (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Association, 1951); Nedra Jenkins, “Texas Art Preview to Be Seen Here April 29,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 20, 1952, 54.
43. Nedra Jenkins, “Art Plan Is Extended into Business Field,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 17, 1952, 27.

44. "[Committee Roster]," ca. 1956, in microfilm reel 1803, AAA Williams Papers.
45. "Artists to Form Subsidiary of Fort Worth Art Association," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 10, 1951; "[Artists Subsidiary Meeting Minutes]," [ca. 1952]; "[Artists Subsidiary Meeting Minutes]," May 4, [1952 or 1953]; "[Artists Subsidiary Meeting Minutes]," January 29, 1953; "[Artists Subsidiary Meeting Minutes]," May 25, 1953; "[Artists Subsidiary Meeting Minutes]," April 11, 1956; all in microfilm reel 1803, AAA Williams Papers.
46. Robinson Edwards, "Owens Oral History," 63.
47. Robinson Edwards, 3-4.
48. Charles T. Williams, "Sculpture Log 1952-1964," 7, ledger in ACMAA Williams Papers.
49. Robinson Edwards, "Boynton Oral History," 15-16. Only eight artists of the 57 in the exhibition did not come from the East or West Coast. The Trotter work in the show, *Two Cities*, was loaned by Ted and Lucile Weiner (*Younger American Painters* (exhibition catalogue), (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1954), www.archive.org).
50. Christopher Ohan, "Ruth Carter Stevenson Oral History Transcript" (unpublished manuscript), 1999-2000, 22-23, Amon Carter Museum of American Art Oral History Archives.
51. [Charles T. Williams] to Dan [Defenbacher] (draft letter), [ca. October 1955], in microfilm reel 1800, AAA Williams Papers.
52. D.S. Defenbacher to Charles Williams, May 25, 1955, in microfilm reel 1800, AAA Williams Papers. "Out here" refers to Oakland, California.
53. Sam Cantey III, "Store's Art Exhibition Features Local Talent," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 24, 1963, 44.
54. *The Eighteenth Annual Texas Painting and Sculpture Exhibition* (exhibition catalogue) (Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio: Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Houston Museum of Fine Arts, and Witte Memorial Museum, 1956), texashistory.unt.edu.
55. Nedra Jenkins, "Texas Sculpture Again Fades into Background," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 4, 1956, 60.
56. [Sculptors] to Jerry Bywaters, Director, Dallas Museum of Fine Arts (draft letter), October 8, 1956, in microfilm reel 1800, AAA Williams Papers.
57. Scott Grant Barker, "Karl Williams Oral History Transcript" (unpublished manuscript), 2021, 5, Amon Carter Museum of American Art Oral History Archives.
58. Cantey III, "Fort Worth," 21; Katie Robinson Edwards, *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas, 2014), 211.
59. *The Sculpture Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Ted Weiner* (exhibition catalogue) (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Association, 1959); Williams, "Sculpture Log 1952-1964," 56. The collection also included works by a handful of women artists as well as by Logan and Sellors.
60. Williams, "Sculpture Log 1952-1964," 97, 103, 110, 125.
61. Williams, 18-19.
62. Williams, "Fountain Sculpture," 9-11.
63. Charles T. Williams to Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Architects (draft letter), May 24, 1955; Charles T. Williams to Eero Saarinen & Associates (draft letter), May 24, 1955; both in microfilm reel 1803, AAA Williams Papers.
64. Williams, "Sculpture Log 1952-1964," 45, 51, 61, 62.
65. Rual Askew, "Stage Is Set for Monument," *Dallas Morning News*, March 22, 1959, 78.
66. "Statues Ok'd at Love Field," *Dallas Morning News*, July 18, 1959, 1.
67. *The Sculpture of Charles Williams* (exhibition catalogue) (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Association, 1957).
68. Karl Williams, email to Katie Robinson Edwards, March 27, 2022.
69. Barker, "Karl Williams Oral History," 8; Williams, "Sculpture Log 1952-1964"; Charles T. Williams, "Sculpture Log

1965-1966," ledger in ACMAA Williams Papers; Karl Williams, conversation with the author, September 17, 2021.

70. Williams, "Sculpture Log 1965-1966."

71. "Sculptor's Remains Interred in Wichita," 1966, clipping in Clippings folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.

72. Donald Vogel, "Foreword," in *Charles T. Williams, Retrospective with Friends* (exhibition catalogue), ed. Diana R. Block (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 1998), ix.

73. Jack [Boynton] to Charlie and Anita [Williams], December 1, 1960, 1, in microfilm reel 1801, AAA Williams Papers.

74. Lloyd Stewart, "Art Show Judge Is Impressed," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 4, 1960, 75.

75. "Tennessee Artist Named to Art Center Teaching Staff," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 20, 1958, 30.

76. Wilson, "History of TCU Art Department," 200-204.

77. Robinson Edwards, "Owens Oral History," 5, 6, 28; Williams, "Sculpture Log 1952-1964," 72; Diana R. Block, "Introduction," in Block, *Charles T. Williams, Retrospective with Friends*, xv.

78. Karl Williams, conversation with the author, September 17, 2021; Robinson Edwards, *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas*, 288.

79. Paul Rogers Harris, "Contemporary Art and Texas Artists in the 50s and 60s," in Block, *Charles T. Williams, Retrospective with Friends*, 26.

80. Vogel, "Foreword," ix.

81. Robinson Edwards, "Boynton Oral History," 4; Robinson Edwards, "Owens Oral History," 72.

82. Vogel, *Memories and Images*, 102-3.

83. Vogel, 120; "Partial Exhibition History," Valley House Gallery & Sculpture Garden, accessed April 22, 2022, www.valleyhouse.com.

84. Rual Askew, "Reviews - Dallas," *Artforum* 1, no. 2 (July 1962): 44.

85. Karl Williams, conversation with the author, April 12, 2022.

86. Charles [T. Williams] to Karl [Williams], January 10, 1966, in Correspondence - General [2] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.

87. Barker, "Karl Williams Oral History," 11-12.

88. Barker, 7.

89. Quentin McGown, *Fort Worth in Vintage Postcards* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2003), 115.

90. Charles T. Williams, "[Essay on Maya culture]," n.d., 24-25, in Manuscripts folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.

91. Stephanie Lewthwaite, "Modernism in the Borderlands: The Life and Art of Octavio Medellín," *Pacific Historical Review* 81, no. 3 (August 2012): 361.

92. Williams, "[Essay on Maya culture]," 19.

93. Block, "Introduction," xv; Thomas Motley, "The Sculptural Works of Charles T. Williams," in Block, *Charles T. Williams, Retrospective with Friends*, xi-xvi.

94. Karl Williams, conversation with the author, April 12, 2022.

95. Mark A. Castro, *Octavio Medellín: Spirit and Form* (exhibition catalogue) (Dallas: Dallas Museum of Art, 2022), 21.

96. Kendall Curlee, "Dallas Museum for Contemporary Arts," Texas State Historical Association, June 20, 2019, www.tshaonline.org.

97. William C. Seitz, *The Art of Assemblage* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1961), 160; Dallas Museum for Contemporary Arts, *The Art of Assemblage* (unpublished exhibition checklist), 1962, 1, 2, 9, texashistory.unt.edu.

98. "Carter Estate Left for Public's Benefit," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 7, 1955, 1.
99. Ohan, "Stevenson Oral History," 32-33.
100. Janelle Montgomery, "Brothers in Arts: A Gentling Chronology," in *Imagined Realism: Scott and Stuart Gentling* (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum of American Art, 2021), 244. The entry on Scott's introduction to Vogel incorrectly refers to Anne Burnett Windfohr (later Marion); it was her mother, Anne Burnett Windfohr (later Tandy) who made the introduction.
101. James J. Meeker, "Los Angeles to Open Largest Art Museum," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 28, 1965, 18.
102. "Kahn's Museum: An Interview with Richard F. Brown," *Art in America*, September-October 1972, 44, 46.
103. Mark Thistlethwaite, "Pablo Picasso," in *Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth 110* (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Association, 2002), 274.
104. More than half of the invited artists, including Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg, and Robert Motherwell, declined to participate in protest of the Vietnam War (Frederic Tuten, "Soggy Day in Venice Town," *New York Times*, July 12, 1970, 87).
105. Canteley III, "Fort Worth," 21.
106. The local press during this era referred to solo shows as "one-man" regardless of the gender of the presenting artist.
107. This analysis is based on exhibition history records in the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth archives.
108. Amon Carter Museum of American Art Exhibition Archives.
109. *20th Century Paintings*.
110. Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, "Image to Abstraction" (press release), August 31, 1967, 1, Amon Carter Museum of American Art Exhibition Archives.
111. Carolyn Aiken, "Third Museum to Culminate Cultural Plan," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 11, 1969, 127, 132.
112. Karl Williams, conversation with the author, April 12, 2022. .

PLATES

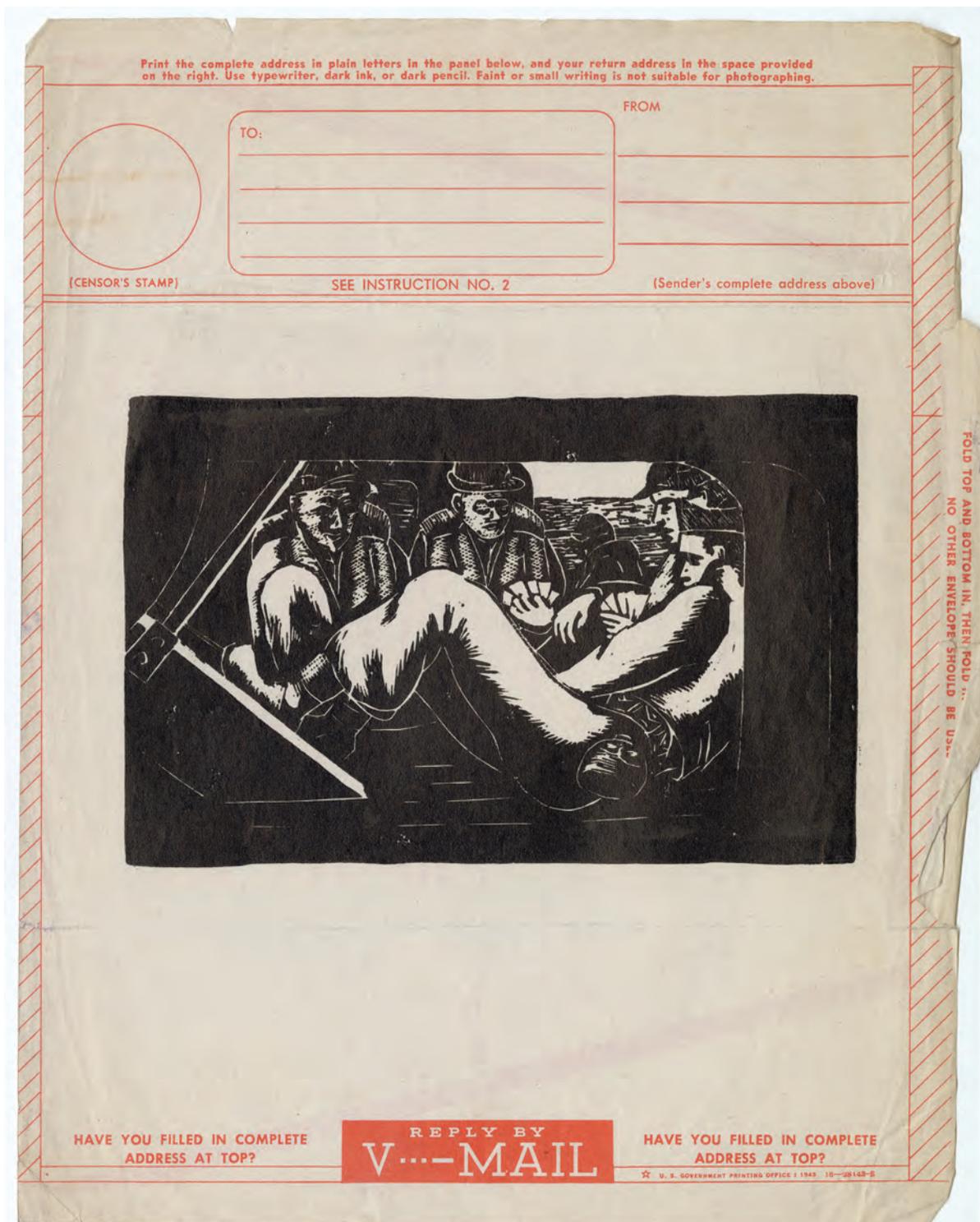


Plate 1 Charles T. Williams, [*Troop ship*], ca. 1945, linocut print, 4 1/8 x 6 1/2 in., Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Prints in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.



Plate 2 Charles T. Williams, *Indecision*, 1949, redwood, 20 x 5 x 3 1/2 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Karl B. Williams.



Plate 3 Charles T. Williams, *Torso #2*, 1949, carved wood, 30 x 11 x 7 in., collection of Beverly and George Palmer.
© Karl B. Williams.



Plate 4 Charles T. Williams, *Continuum*, 1951, limestone, 15 x 6 x 12 in., private collection. © Karl B. Williams.



Plate 5 Charles T. Williams, *Cowboy*, 1949, assembled copper and wood, 23 x 16 x 16 in., collection of Karl Williams.
© Karl B. Williams.



Plate 6 Charles T. Williams, *Seated Figure*, 1953, welded steel, 26 x 18 x 9 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Karl B. Williams.



Plate 7 Bror Utter (1913–1993), *Metamorphosis III (Assembly of Birds)*, 1953, oil on artist's board, 20 x 26 in., Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, 1996.6. © Pamela Arnoult.

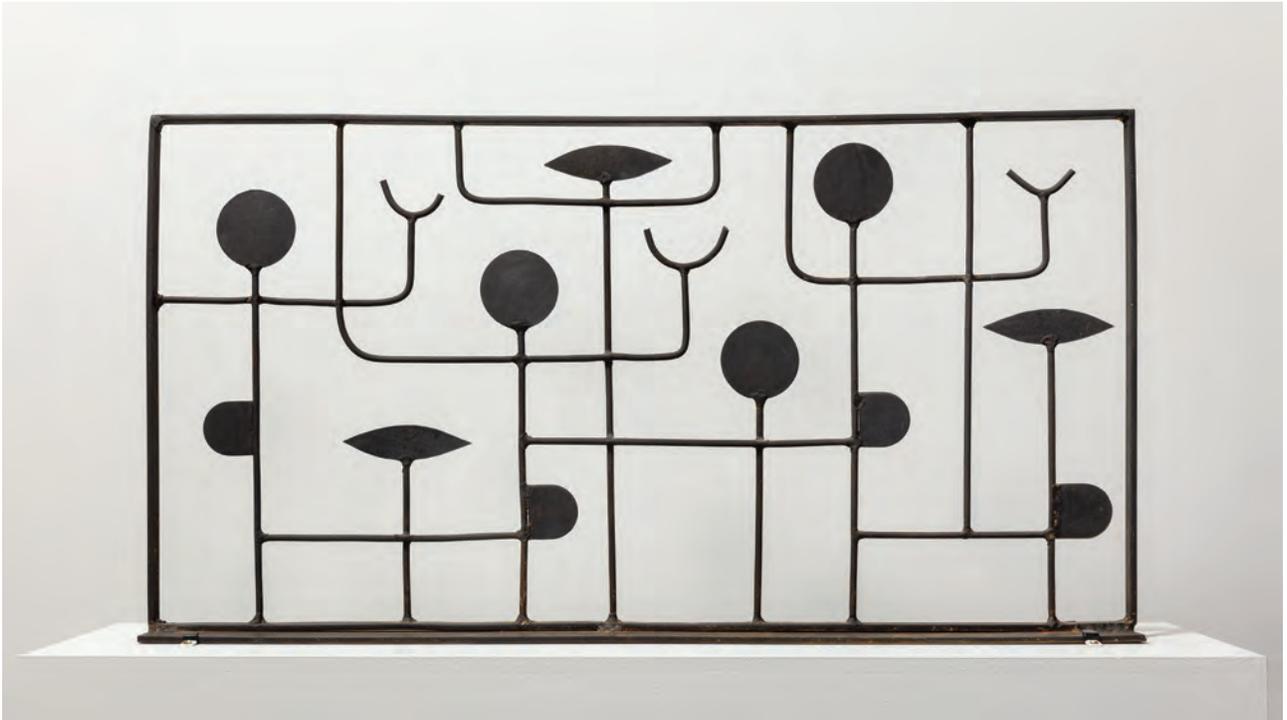


Plate 8 Charles T. Williams, *Sculptured Composition* (also called *Sculpture for People Who Are Accustomed to Viewing Paintings*), 1953, welded steel, 19 1/4 x 36 1/4 in., collection of the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas, 1954.3. © Karl B. Williams.



Plate 9 Charles T. Williams, *Odalisque*, 1954, copper sheet and brass rod, [36 x 96 x 12] in., private collection.
© Karl B. Williams.



Plate 10 Charles T. Williams, *Untitled [Study for fountain]*, 1954, bronze, 15 x 8 x 8 in., collection of Karl Williams.
© Karl B. Williams.



Plate 11 Charles T. Williams, *Model #2 for Weiner Fountain*, 1954, copper and brass on steel base, 27 3/4 x 18 1/8 x 15 3/8 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Karl B. Williams.



Plate 12 Charles T. Williams, *The Argument*, 1955, cast bronze, 10 1/2 x 10 x 7 in., collection of Juli and Sam Stevens.
© Karl B. Williams.



Plate 13 Charles T. Williams, *Earth Mother*, 1958, Carthage marble, 48 x 156 x 48 in., University of North Texas, Art in Public Places Collection, UNT.2010.21. © Karl B. Williams.



Plate 14 Charles T. Williams, [*Torn wax study*], n.d., cast bronze, 18 x 7 x 6 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Karl B. Williams.



Plate 15 Charles T. Williams, *Family Group*, 1959, cast bronze, 31 1/4 x 27 x 7 1/2 in., collection of Karl Williams.
© Karl B. Williams.



Plate 16 Charles T. Williams, *Toltec Heads*, 1960, assembled steel, 11 x 13 1/2 x 5 in., collection of Karl Williams.
© Karl B. Williams.



Plate 17 Jack Boynton (1928–2010), *Captive Audience*, 1960, assembled wood and metal, 4 x 11 x 8 in., collection of Karl Williams. © The Estate of James Boynton.



Plate 18 Roy Fridge (1927–2007), *Gift Object*, ca. 1960, carved and assembled wood, 13 x 10 x 5 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Roy Fridge Estate.



Plate 19 David McManaway (1927-2010), *Gift Object*, ca. 1960, carved stone and assembled metal, 8 1/2 x 9 x 3 in., collection of Karl Williams. © David McManaway Estate.



Plate 20 Charles T. Williams, *Totems Suburbium*, 1962, assembled found objects, 84 x 105 x 36 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Karl B. Williams.



Plate 21 Charles T. Williams, *Ironcestors*, 1962, found objects, left: 69 1/2 x 12 x 12 1/2 in., right: 64 x 12 1/2 x 15 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Karl B. Williams.



Plate 22 Charles T. Williams, *Man and the Sea*, 1963, assembled wood and metal, 72 x 36 x 4 in., collection of Karl Williams.
© Karl B. Williams.



Plate 23 Duayne Hatchett (1925–2015), [*Charles Williams*], 1963, bronze and wood, 11 x 4 x 4 in., collection of Karl Williams.
© Duayne Hatchett Estate.



Plate 24 Jim Love (1927–2005), *Mother-in-Lieu*, 1964, cast bronze, 12 1/2 x 9 1/2 x 4 in., collection of Karl Williams.
© Estate of Jim Love.



Plate 25 Charles T. Williams, *Beam Construction*, 1965, welded steel, 109 3/4 x 24 x 24 in., collection of Karl Williams.
© Karl B. Williams.



Plate 26 Charles T. Williams, *Masque*, 1965, assembled steel, 12 x 4 x 4 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Karl B. Williams.



Plate 27 Charles T. Williams, *Fun with Freud*, 1964, welded copper, 37 x 29 x 8 in., GERALYN and MARK KEVER COLLECTION.
© KARL B. WILLIAMS.



Plate 28 Charles T. Williams, *Earth Gender*, 1974, cast bronze, 76 x 36 x 8 in., collection of Karl Williams. © Karl B. Williams.



Plate 29 Bror Utter (1913–1993), *Posada Gaudi*, 1967, etching and aquatint, 7 5/16 x 10 1/16 in., Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Gift of Earl G. Wade, 2006.24. © Pamela Arnoult.

Figures and Fortunes: A Chronology of the Fort Worth Art Scene and Charles Truett Williams

S. Janelle Montgomery

Fort Worth Art Scene | Charles Truett Williams

1910

■ Mrs. Charles Scheuber (née Jennie Scott) and Mrs. M.P. Bewley (née Hallie Samuel), among others, establish the Fort Worth Art Association (FWAA) to organize exhibitions and acquisitions for the art gallery in the public library.¹

1910-19

■ Many of the group that will come to be known as the Fort Worth Circle are born in Fort Worth, including Veronica Helfensteller (1910–1964, Tucson), E. Dickson Reeder (1912–1970), Bror A. Utter (1913–1993), and William (Bill) Bomar Jr. (1919–1991, Ranchos de Taos).²

March 24, 1918

■ Charles Truett Williams is born in Weatherford, Texas, to Thomas Lafayette (T.L.) Williams, a farmer and later a stonemason, and Lucy Hurst Williams, a housewife.³

1924

■ Fort Worth public schools, which already provide art instruction in White elementary schools, begin offering art as an elective in White high schools.⁴

October 1932

■ The Texas School of the Arts (later the Fort Worth School of Fine Arts) opens. In its studios, several Fort Worth Circle artists form enduring friendships. Sallie Gillespie (1898–1991, Taos), Blanche McVeigh (1895, St. Charles, Missouri–1970), and Evaline Sellors (1903–1995) found the school. They all studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA)

(fig. 5.1) and in Europe.⁵



Fig. 5.1 Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, ca. 1910, Library Company of Philadelphia.

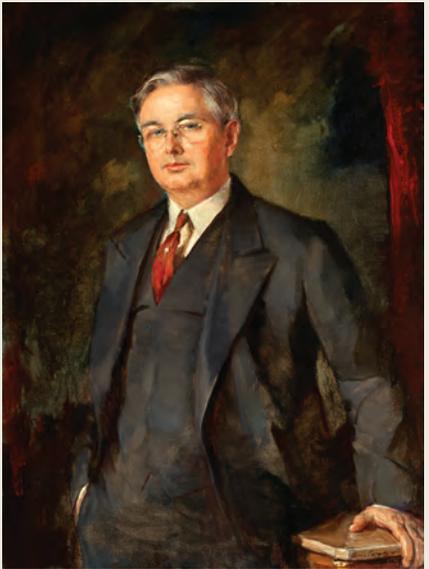


Fig. 5.2 Dario Rappaport (1894–1964), *Portrait of Kay Kimbell*, 1935, oil on canvas, 40 x 35 in., Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, 1935.09.01.



Fig. 5.3 Dario Rappaport (1894–1964), *Portrait of Velma Kimbell*, 1935, oil on canvas, 40 x 35 in., Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, 1935.09.02.



Fig. 5.4 Scott Gentling (1942–2011), *Amon G. Carter*, 2008, acrylic on canvas, 29 1/2 x 33 1/8 in., Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, 2008.14. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

March 1935

■ New York gallerist Bertram Newhouse lends an exhibition to the FWAA. Kay and Velma (née Fuller) Kimbell (figs. 5.2 and 5.3) make their first significant art purchase, *The Artist's Children*, by Sir William Beechey, from the show.⁶ The same year, Amon G. Carter Sr. (fig. 5.4) begins collecting, acquiring Frederic Remington's *His First Lesson* from Newhouse.⁷ For the next three decades, Newhouse supports the FWAA, making regular loans, assisting with conservation needs, and funding awards.

June 1935–September 1937

■ After graduating from Mineral Wells High School, Williams works in his father's construction business.⁸ The industry contacts prove helpful when Charles begins sculpting.⁹

1937–38

■ Williams attends Weatherford Junior College.¹⁰

1938–41

■ Williams studies art, math, and physics at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas.¹¹

June 15, 1939

■ The FWAA celebrates its larger gallery space in the new public library building with a show dedicated to local artists. The exhibition, colloquially known as the Local, becomes an annual event through 1977. Eminent art professionals from outside Fort Worth judge the entries, and for many years artists of the Fort Worth Circle dominate the awards.¹² The 1939 show includes the work of one Black artist, Gerald R. Boyd, who is unable to view the exhibition due to the library's Whites Only policy.¹³

Fall 1939

■ Sellors teaches evening classes in sculpture at Texas Christian University (TCU). PAFA alumnus Samuel P. Ziegler chairs the art department.¹⁴

February–March 1940

■ Of the ninety-eight artists in the first Texas General Exhibition, the five from Fort Worth are all women, including Helfensteller, McVeigh, and Sellors.¹⁵

Fall 1940

■ Reeder and his wife, Flora Blanc Reeder (1916, New York–1995), move to Fort Worth after living in Paris and New York. For more than a decade, their Saturday evening salons enliven the Fort Worth art community.¹⁶

1941

■ Bomar moves to New York City. He returns to Fort Worth frequently and remains a prominent part of the Fort Worth Circle.¹⁷



Fig. 5.5 Charles T. Williams, [*Louise and Karl Williams*], ca. 1942, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

February 27, 1941

■ Williams and Virginia Louise Beaver marry.¹⁸ The couple settle in Atlanta, where he works as a civilian district engineer for the Army Corps of Engineers and takes life drawing at the High Museum and engineering courses at Georgia Tech.¹⁹ In November they have a son, Karl Boyd ([fig. 5.5](#)).²⁰



Fig. 5.6 Sam B. Cantey III, new president of the Fort Worth Art Association, March 3, 1942, courtesy, Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

March 3, 1942

■ Samuel B. Cantey III becomes president of the FWAA (fig. 5.6).²¹ Cantey and his wife, Betsy Lee Cantey, are passionate supporters of local arts and Fort Worth Circle artists.²² Cantey remains active in FWAA leadership until his death in 1973.²³

1943

■ Kelly Fearing (1918, Fordyce, Arkansas–2011, Austin) moves to Fort Worth from Louisiana and soon becomes part of the Fort Worth Circle.²⁴

May 4, 1943

■ The FWAA begins holding annual solo exhibitions dedicated to local artists with a show of works by McVeigh.²⁵



Fig. 5.7 Unknown photographer, possibly Charles's father, T.L. Williams, [Back left: Louise Beaver Williams and Charles Truett Williams; back right: Charles's brother Joe Royce (J.R.) Williams and his wife Louise; front: Charles's mother Lucy Williams and his son Karl Boyd Williams], ca. 1946, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

August 1943–January 1945

■ Williams works in Mobile, Alabama, briefly before being drafted into the army in March 1944. He is sent to Fort Belvoir, Virginia, for training.²⁶

September 18–October 7, 1944

■ The Weyhe Gallery in New York City exhibits works by Blanc, Bomar, Helfensteller, Reeder, Utter, and Donald Vogel (1917, Milwaukee–2004, Dallas) in *Six Texas Painters*.²⁷

February 1945–June 2, 1946

■ Williams is stationed in Paris with the Army Corps of Engineers. After his discharge, he rejoins Louise in Atlanta, and they make a trip to Texas to see family and friends (fig. 5.7).²⁸

Spring 1945

■ Cynthia Brants (1924–2006), part of the second-generation of the Fort Worth Circle, returns to Fort Worth after graduating from Sarah Lawrence College, where Ruth Carter, daughter of Amon G. and Nenetta Burton Carter, is a classmate.²⁹



Fig. 5.8 Sallie Gillespie, art educator and lecturer. Lectured in the gallery of the Public Library on the current non-objective art show, February 2, 1945, courtesy Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

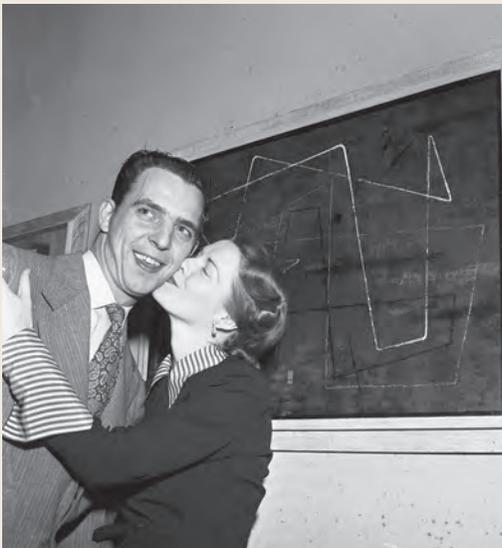


Fig. 5.9 John Erickson's wife, Jane, puts her own accolade on the cheek of her husband, who won the top prize in the 1951 Local Artists Show. Erickson, TCU commercial art instructor, received the \$300 Newhouse award for an abstract painting, *Space-Space*, shown in the background, March 22, 1951, courtesy Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

June 1945

■ Gillespie becomes secretary (and de facto director) of the FWAA gallery (fig. 5.8), and Sellors, Reeder, and Utter begin teaching classes there.³⁰

October 3, 1945

■ Fort Worth voters approve a bond issue to build an art museum.³¹

August 12, 1947

■ Williams's job in Atlanta becomes a casualty of a reduction in force.³²

August 28, 1947

■ Louise Williams dies of viral pneumonia.³³ Charles requests a transfer to North Texas, where his parents can help raise Karl.³⁴

Fall 1947

■ TCU begins offering Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Fine Arts. Zeigler hires John W. (Jack) Erickson (1919, Monmouth, Illinois–1997, Seattle) as an instructor (fig. 5.9).³⁵

Fall 1947

■ Fearing moves to Austin to take a position on the art faculty at the University of Texas.³⁶

October 1, 1947

■ The Corps of Engineers approves Williams's transfer to Dallas.³⁷ He completes the move by mid-month, commuting to Dallas from Fort Worth, where he sets up a studio in the garage behind the family's house at 4723 El Campo.³⁸

1948

■ Helfensteller moves to Santa Fe.³⁹



Fig. 5.10 McKie Trotter, left, painter, and Charles T. Williams, sculptor, discuss Trotter's *Weather Totem*, hanging on the wall behind him, and Williams's bronze and walnut sculpture, *Guilt, Fear and Worry*. The two-man show will be held at the Fifth Avenue Gallery, November 23, 1960, courtesy Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.



Fig. 5.11 Mr. Leonard M. Logan III, of the Texas Christian University art department, is shown standing next to Mrs. B.D. Monk, the Women's Club Art Department chairman, as he uses her as a model for a lecture-demonstration on "Terra Cotta Portrait Making," April 27, 1950, courtesy Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

Probably January 1948⁴⁰

Williams enrolls in the TCU BFA program, where he meets James (Jack) Boynton (1928–2010, Houston). The two begin an artistic dialogue that lasts until Williams's death.⁴¹ Erickson also becomes a lifelong friend.⁴² Boynton later introduces Williams to aspiring artists Bob Cunningham (1929–1991), Erv Harrison (1925, Graham, Texas–1977, South Bend, Texas) and Boynton's future wife, Ann Williams (née Hilda Anne Williams, 1930, [De Leon, Texas]–1964, [New Mexico]).⁴³

March 20, 1948

Robert P. Windfohr becomes president of the FWAA and remains active in FWAA leadership until his death in 1964.⁴⁴ Windfohr and his wife, Anne Valliant Burnett Windfohr (later Tandy), assemble one of the country's finest collections of modern art.⁴⁵

June 1-15, 1948

Williams participates in the FWAA's GI student art show.⁴⁶

Fall 1948

McKie Trotter III (1918, Manchester, Georgia–1999) joins the art faculty at Texas Wesleyan College (TWC, now Texas Wesleyan University) (fig. 5.10). In 1954 he leaves TWC for the TCU art department.⁴⁷

May 16, 1949

Flooding devastates Fort Worth.⁴⁸ Williams works with the city to salvage uprooted black walnut trees.⁴⁹ Sculptures made from the wood are accepted into the 1949–50 and 1950–51 Texas General Exhibitions; one wins the purchase award at Kansas City's Mid-America Annual in October 1950 (pl. 3).⁵⁰

Fall 1949

TCU's art department moves into a new fine arts building (see fig. 4.6) and hires Leonard M. Logan III (1922, New York–1996, Norman, Oklahoma), the first full-time instructor with sculpture expertise (fig. 5.11).⁵¹



Fig. 5.12 Octavio Medellín (1907–1999), *History of Mexico*, ca. 1949, direct carving in Honduras red mahogany, 84 in. tall, Guadalupe Centers, Kansas City, MO, Gift of Frank Paxton Jr. © Medellin Family, image courtesy Dallas Museum of Art.

1950

■ Williams visits Taos. He makes several sculptures, including *Lava*, from the area's volcanic rock (see fig. 4.8).⁵²

March 1950

■ Williams appears in the Local for the first time. Sellors wins the sculpture award, which is sponsored by Newhouse, and Logan receives an honorable mention.⁵³

April 10–22, 1950

■ One of the few commercial galleries in Fort Worth, Lon Hellums, has a show of works by Boynton, his wife Ann, Erickson, Trotter, and Williams, among others.⁵⁴ McVeigh is director of another, Collins Gallery.⁵⁵

June 1950

■ Gillespie resigns from the FWAA and moves to Taos.⁵⁶

July 1950

■ Williams places first in wood sculpture with *Abstract Figure No. 1* at Dallas's First Annual Exhibition of Crafts and Sculpture.⁵⁷

Fall 1950

■ TCU's art department sees increased enrollments, a trend that continues at TCU and TWC through the 1950s.⁵⁸

November 5–19, 1950

■ Octavio Medellín (1907, Matahuala, Mexico–1999, Dallas) shows *History of Mexico* at the FWAA gallery (fig. 5.12). Frank Paxton Jr., a lumber company executive in Kansas City, commissioned the large mahogany sculpture.⁵⁹

December 4–31, 1950

■ The FWAA continues annual solo exhibitions of local artists with works by Brants.⁶⁰ McVeigh shows in 1952, Utter in 1953, Trotter in 1954, Boynton in 1955, and Williams in 1957.⁶¹



Fig. 5.13 General Committee, left to right, Sam B. Cantey III, Mrs. E.W. Schenecker, Robert F. Windfohr and Dan Defenbacher and Mrs. J. Lee Johnson III, May 11, 1952, courtesy Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

February 4-June 24, 1951

■ Williams takes a leave of absence from the corps to focus on his education.⁶²

March 25, 1951

■ Williams receives the Newhouse sculpture prize for *Continuum* (pl. 4) at the Local, and Sellors gets an honorable mention.⁶³

April 1951

■ Betty McLean (later Blake) opens a contemporary art gallery in Dallas; its manager is Donald Vogel.⁶⁴ They soon plan shows of works by Bomar, Utter, and Fearing.⁶⁵

May 27, 1951

■ Williams's *Reflections* and *Revelations* are accepted by the 57th Annual Exhibition of Western Art in Denver.⁶⁶

June 1951

■ The FWAA announces Daniel Defenbacher, formerly of the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, as its first official director (fig. 5.13).⁶⁷ Soon after he arrives, Defenbacher announces he will organize an ambitious group show, *Texas Wildcat*. It opens in October and travels to Dallas and San Francisco.⁶⁸ Defenbacher and Williams become friends and stay in touch long after Defenbacher's departure.

August 31, 1951

■ Williams and Anita Stuart McConnell, a teacher, marry (fig. 5.14).⁶⁹

November 1951

■ The FWAA forms an "artists' subsidiary" membership group to represent the profession on the board and in programming. Initial membership includes Utter and Brants as chairmen, and Erickson, McVeigh, Trotter, and Williams, among others.⁷⁰



Fig. 5.14 Unknown photographer, [Left to right: Anita Williams, an unknown gentleman, possibly David Brownlow, and Charles Williams at the Boyntons' going away party], 1955, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

October 21, 1951

■ Logan, Sellors, and Williams have works accepted into the 13th annual Texas General; Williams's *Two Figures* is recommended for purchase.⁷¹

November 11, 1951

■ Logan and Williams participate in the Mid-American Annual in Kansas City.⁷²

1952

■ Williams relocates to an old farm near what will become Lake Arlington. Artists, patrons, gallerists, museum professionals, and art students gather in his studio there to learn and play. Regular guests include the Boyntons, David Brownlow (1915–2008), Defenbacher, McLean, the Reederes, Sellors, Utter, and the Trotters. Visiting dignitaries such as Buckminster Fuller, Claes Oldenburg, and Isamu Noguchi stop by.⁷³

By January 1952

■ Williams and Medellín become friends.⁷⁴

March 1, 1952

■ Sellors wins first place in sculpture for *Head* at the Local (fig. 5.15). Brants and Boynton tie for first in painting.⁷⁵

June 16–September 27, 1952

■ M. Knoedler & Company in New York dedicates a show to contemporary Texas art, including works by Bomar, Boynton, Brants, Erickson, McVeigh, Reeder, Trotter, Utter, and Williams.⁷⁶ The show travels to the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH) in October.⁷⁷

August 24, 1952

■ Williams receives his BFA from TCU, the first awarded in sculpture.⁷⁸

September 9–October 7, 1952

■ The FWAA shows Boynton, Erickson, Trotter, and Williams in *Three Painters and a Sculptor*.⁷⁹



Fig. 5.15 Award winners Evaline Sellors next to Dickson Reeder's etching *Insect*; Dickson Reeder beside Evaline Sellors's *Head* sculpture, March 3, 1952, courtesy Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

May 3, 1953

■ Williams is the only sculptor to have work accepted into the Local. The *Star-Telegram* suggests the show heralds a new era: “It was something of a jolt to discover that some of the city’s artists who have achieved so much national recognition were completely omitted from the show or got in with only one entry.”⁸⁰ In fact, during the 1950s many of the show’s awards go not to Fort Worth Circle artists but to faculty and students of TCU.⁸¹

December 1953

■ Logan installs a sculpture in the cafeteria at Texas Instruments.⁸²

1954

■ Ted and Lucile (née Clements) Weiner complete their house and garden designed by New York architect Edward Larrabee Barnes, the first International Style home in the region (see fig. 4.11).⁸³ The space allows the couple to expand their collection of modern sculpture, which becomes an important source of both inspiration and sales for Williams, including a fountain inspired by Asian calligraphy (pl. 11).⁸⁴

1954–55

■ Williams completes several commissions for the new Ridglea Country Club, including *Odalisque* (pl. 9) for the cocktail bar and a fountain for the entrance (pl. 10).⁸⁵

February 7–March 14, 1954

■ The Dallas Museum of Fine Arts (DMFA, now the Dallas Museum of Art) hosts *Some Sculptors of the Region*, including Logan, Medellín, Sellors, Williams, and ten others. The show travels to San Antonio, New Orleans, and Fort Worth.⁸⁶

March 28, 1954

■ Williams’s *Ancient Vestige* takes the top prize at the New Orleans Art Association show. His *Jean Valjean* (see fig. 3.24) received an award at the Local in February. Later in the year, he wins accolades in Denver.⁸⁷

May–July 1954

■ Boynton, Erickson, and Trotter participate in the Guggenheim Museum’s *Younger American Painters* show.⁸⁸ The show’s organizer, Guggenheim director James Johnson Sweeney, becomes director of the Museum of Fine Arts Houston (MFAH) in 1961.⁸⁹

October 8, 1954

■ After years of fundraising and organizing by Cantey, Defenbacher, Windfohr, and others, and nearly a decade after a bond election authorized city funding, the FWAA gallery moves from the library into its own building. Designed by modernist Herbert Bayer, the Fort Worth Art Center (FWAC) becomes the cornerstone of the cultural

district in Amon Carter Square (see figs. 4.9 and 4.10).⁹⁰ Defenbacher attends the opening, then returns to Oakland; in May he had accepted the job of president at the California College of Arts and Crafts.⁹¹

February 27, 1955

■ TWC has a solo show of works by Gene Owens (b. 1931, Birdville, Texas), a recent graduate.⁹² As a student, he frequented life-drawing sessions held at Williams's studio, where he could study nude models (which were prohibited on campus).⁹³ Later in the year, he builds a burnout kiln, used in lost wax casting, in Williams's yard.⁹⁴

April 20, 1955

■ Henry Caldwell, formerly of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, becomes the director of the Fort Worth Art Center.⁹⁵ He brings renewed energy to the classes, which painter Emily Guthrie Smith (1909–1989), Sellors, Trotter, and Utter teach for many years.⁹⁶



Fig. 5.16 Unknown photographer, [Ann Boynton, left, and Jack Boynton], 1955, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

April 24, 1955

■ Vogel and his wife, Peggy (née Margaret Mayer), open Valley House Gallery in Dallas. They call it a successor “in inspiration, policy and ideals” to Betty McLean’s gallery, which ceased operations in 1954.⁹⁷

May 29, 1955

■ Boynton completes his MFA at TCU.⁹⁸ In the fall, he takes a position at the University of Houston (fig. 5.16).⁹⁹

June 23, 1955

■ Amon G. Carter Sr. dies. His will requests a museum be built to house his collection of works by Frederic Remington and Charles Russell.¹⁰⁰

August 26, 1955

■ Williams receives his MFA from TCU in absentia as he recovers from a heart attack.¹⁰¹ He stays busy making mobiles. The scare motivates him to leave the corps to pursue sculpture full time.¹⁰²

September 11, 1955

■ Williams and TCU faculty member James Sterritt (1924, Morris, Illinois–1995, Eureka, Missouri) demonstrate contemporary sculpture technique at the FWAC.¹⁰³

October 24, 1955

■ Williams lectures to the local American Institute of Architects (AIA) chapter.¹⁰⁴

February 2, 1956

■ Brownlow, Trotter, Utter, and Williams, along with a number of other area artists, organize the DFW Men of Art Guild to support each other and foster quality art. In the fall, the group opens a gallery in Dallas.¹⁰⁵

April 8, 1956

■ Williams receives an award for *Eight* (see fig. 4.18) at the MFAH Gulf-Caribbean Exhibition, which travels to Boston, Utica, Pittsburgh, Colorado Springs, and Dallas.¹⁰⁶

April 1–May 1, 1957

■ *Sculptors of Texas* at the FWAC includes eighteen artists, most of them from Houston. Five are women, and one of the men, Carroll H. Simms (1924, Bald Knob, Arkansas–2010, Houston) is Black. Williams and Sellors represent Fort Worth.¹⁰⁷

April 4–28, 1957

■ Jermayne MacAgy (née Noble) organizes *Pacemakers* at the CAMH, with work by Williams and Boynton, among others. Boynton introduces Williams to sculptor Jim Love (1927, Amarillo–2005, Houston).¹⁰⁸ In 1960, Love introduces Williams to two other artists who become part of his circle, Roy Fridge (1927, Beeville, Texas–2007, Port Aransas, Texas) and David McManaway (1927, Chicago–2010, Dallas).¹⁰⁹

April 29, 1957

■ *LIFE* magazine publishes a feature on Texas arts. Williams's *Battleground* appears along with works by Sellors and Medellín.¹¹⁰

May 3, 1957

■ Temple Emanu-El in Dallas opens its new building. Williams and Medellín contribute to the interior decor.¹¹¹

August 27, 1957

■ The Dallas Fort Worth Turnpike (now I-30) opens.¹¹² Williams and Medellín collaborate on *Theme of Two Cities*, a mosaic for the Turnpike Authority's operations center.¹¹³

November 5–December 1, 1957

■ Williams's solo show at the FWAC includes 49 works.¹¹⁴

January 5, 1958

■ Williams sells *Stage and Actors* to Dallas's high-end retail magnate Stanley Marcus.¹¹⁵



Fig. 5.17 Bror Utter, left, and Mrs. Pauline Evans, directors of the Fifth Avenue Gallery, discuss hanging of George Grammer's painting, *Oil Well*. The sculpture at right on the mantel is by Charles T. Williams, February 28, 1959, courtesy Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.



Fig. 5.18 Charles T. Williams, [*Antigua, inscribed "Octavio - Consuelo Guatemala"*], 1959, black-and-white photograph, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Photos in Charles Truett Williams Papers. © Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

January 16, 1958

■ Victor Hammer, a New York gallerist, arranges to have a block of jade shipped to Williams's studio "from our mine in Lander, Wyoming."¹¹⁶ He later tries and fails to persuade his brothers, Armand and Harry, to exhibit Williams's work at their galleries.¹¹⁷

Late summer 1958

■ The Reeders leave Fort Worth to spend two years in Paris.¹¹⁸

August 10, 1958

■ Owens returns to Fort Worth from Georgia to head the TWC art department.¹¹⁹ He and Williams team up to perfect their bronze casting techniques.¹²⁰

November–December 1958

■ Williams has a solo show at Houston's New Arts Gallery.¹²¹

February 26–March 29, 1959

■ Jermayne MacAgy organizes *Totems Not Taboo: An Exhibition of Primitive Art* at the CAMH. The show inspires Williams's *Ancient Warrior* (see fig. 4.20).¹²²

March–April 1959

■ After decades with few commercial art outlets, Fort Worth suddenly has four new galleries. Pauline Evans and Utter establish the Fifth Avenue Gallery (fig. 5.17). Electra Carlin refocuses an existing gallery, Wonderful Things, and in 1960 she changes its name to Carlin Galleries.¹²³ The *Star-Telegram* publishes its first Gallery Calendar.¹²⁴ By 1965, nearly twenty more galleries open. Area high and middle schools have art exhibitions and sales, as do banks, hotels, furniture shops, and the public library.¹²⁵

June 4–August 29, 1959

■ The Williamses and Octavio and Consuelo Medellín (née Padilla) take a road trip to Mexico and Guatemala (fig. 5.18).¹²⁶ Medellín lectures on the trip at the FWAA the following March.¹²⁷



Fig. 5.19 Mr. and Mrs. Ted Weiner pose in their home with sculptures from their collection: *The Young Diana* (1952) by Mary Callery at center, Elisabeth Frink's *Bird* (1959) on the lower left, and Eros Pellini's *Head of a Girl* (1958-59) on the right, ca. 1959, photo by Phil Morrison, collection of the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth.

By September 1959

■ Oilman Julian Meeker commissions a Williams fountain, *Arabian Fascination*.¹²⁸

October 5–25, 1959

■ The FWAC exhibits the Weiner's sculpture collection (fig. 5.19). Three of Sellors's works and two by Love are in the show, as are examples by Jacques Lipchitz, Henry Moore, and Pablo Picasso. Williams has eight works on view, more than any other artist.¹²⁹

April or May 1960

■ Williams begins exhibiting with Valley House, regularly participating in its Spring Sculpture Shows.¹³⁰

March 23–April 4, 1960

■ Williams has a solo show at the Nye Gallery in Dallas.¹³¹

March 31–April 2, 1960

■ Williams attends the first-ever National Bronze Casting Conference in Lawrence, Kansas. Logan and Owens also attend, and Williams meets Duayne Hatchett (1925, Shawnee, Oklahoma–2015, Buffalo), who becomes a regular visitor to Williams's studio.¹³²

May 22, 1960

■ Williams judges the TCU student art exhibition.¹³³

July 5, 1960

■ The FWAA hosts a reception for its new director, Raymond T. Entenmann, who comes from PAFA. Caldwell resigned in March.¹³⁴

August 28, 1960

■ Cantey laments the FWAA budget situation: "It has not been possible since moving into the new building to acquire an example from the work of a local one-man show."¹³⁵

September 6–October 2, 1960

■ The FWAC exhibits *Fort Worth Collects*, showing works borrowed from sixteen local collectors. Eleven lenders are board members, including the Canteys, Ruth Carter Johnson (later Stevenson) and her husband J. Lee Johnson III, John L. Paxton (brother of Frank Paxton Jr.) and his wife Mary Lou (née Gray), and the Weiners.¹³⁶

Probably September 13, 1960

■ Owens and Williams wave as Senators John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson drive by Williams's studio during a campaign tour.¹³⁷

November 27–December 31, 1960

■ Williams and Trotter have a two-man show at Fifth Avenue Gallery.¹³⁸

December 1, 1960

■ A letter from Boynton to Williams refers to a “recent episode” and asks, “When do you get out of the hospital, Chas?” suggesting Williams has suffered another heart attack.¹³⁹

January 24, 1961

■ The Amon Carter Museum of Western Art (ACMWA, now the Amon Carter Museum of American Art) opens in a building designed by Philip Johnson. Jermayne MacAgy installs the first show and prepares the catalogue. Raymond Entenmann serves as acting administrator. Richard F. Brown of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) is an advisor.¹⁴⁰ The *Star-Telegram* provides ten pages of coverage interspersed with articles such as “Horse, Poultry Entries Set Stock Show Record.”

February 6–25, 1961

■ The FWAC supplements a MoMA show on modern church architecture with sculptures by Medellín, Owens, and Williams.¹⁴¹ At an event during the show's run, Williams and Owens demonstrate lost wax casting.¹⁴²

April 23, 1961

■ Fort Worth's First National Bank opens a new building in downtown, with a plaza designed by Isamu Noguchi.¹⁴³

August 1, 1961

■ Mitchell A. Wilder arrives from the Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles to assume the director's post at the ACMWA.¹⁴⁴

August 13, 1961

■ A letter signed by several artists asks the *Star-Telegram* for an art critic interested in art and not a “snobbish art society.” Soon after, two of the letter writers resign their positions at the FWAC, although the FWAC denies pressuring them to do so. Another letter accuses the center of being run not for the city’s public but its elite.¹⁴⁵

December 3, 1961

■ To accommodate large-scale screen and fountain commissions for the Sheraton Hotel in Houston, Williams expands his studio.¹⁴⁶

January 10–February 11, 1962

■ The Dallas Museum for Contemporary Arts (DMCA) hosts *The Art of Assemblage*, organized by MoMA. The DMCA’s director, Douglas MacAgy, adds sculptures by McManaway and Fridge to the show.¹⁴⁷

May 20–June 13, 1962

■ Williams has a solo show at the New Arts Gallery in Houston.¹⁴⁸

May 23–June 10, 1962

■ *Three Texas Artists* at the DMCA shows Williams with McManaway and abstract painter Dorothy Antoinette (Toni) LaSelle (1901, Beatrice, Nebraska–2002, Denton).¹⁴⁹

July 1962

■ The second issue of a new publication, *Artforum*, reviews the Valley House Spring Sculpture exhibition, admiring Williams’s sculptures in particular.¹⁵⁰ A note in the *Star-Telegram* scolds the magazine, which “has yet to discover Fort Worth exists.”¹⁵¹

July 15–August 19, 1962

■ The FWAC has a show of drawings by John Biggers (1924, Gastonia, North Carolina–2001, Houston).¹⁵² It is probably the first solo show of works by a Black man in the organization’s history.

September 9, 1962

■ Fifth Avenue Gallery announces it will close, citing staffing issues.¹⁵³

October 1962

■ Williams wins the San Antonio Art League purchase prize of \$1,200 at the Texas General for *Ancient Warrior*; the exhibition catalogue features the one-ton, ten-foot-tall sculpture on its cover (see fig. 4.20).¹⁵⁴



Fig. 5.20 Mrs. J. Lee (Ruth Carter) Johnson III and Mrs. Ted (Lucile) Weiner strap a bronze owl sculpture by Pablo Picasso into a car for the trip to the Hotel Texas for President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy's visit, November 20, 1963, courtesy Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

March 17, 1963

■ Williams installs part of his *Heritage of the Great Southwest* series in the FWAC garden (see fig. 4.17). He says he was inspired by Maya and other Indigenous cultures' use of stones.¹⁵⁵

April 7, 1963

■ James J. Meeker, son of Williams's patron Julian Meeker, becomes the *Star-Telegram's* art critic.¹⁵⁶ While supportive of local artists, he increases the paper's focus on art on the coasts and in Europe.

May 1963

■ The DMCA merges with the DMFA.¹⁵⁷

August 15–September 26, 1963

■ Charles and Anita travel to Europe and Egypt. One of Williams's Dallas patrons, Joe (J.O.) Lambert, finances the trip.¹⁵⁸

October 11–27, 1963

■ Williams has a solo show at the University of Oklahoma Museum of Art.¹⁵⁹

November 20, 1963

■ Williams considers a trip to Yucatán with Floyd (Doc) Keen, a local veterinarian and stunt pilot. "Sure am looking forward to Palenque, El Tajin, Chichen Itza, Uxmal and Merida again."¹⁶⁰

November 21, 1963

■ President John F. Kennedy and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy spend the night in Fort Worth. Cantey, Ruth Carter Johnson, and Wilder decorate the suite at Hotel Texas with "a choice selection of works by great artists." According to the *Star-Telegram*, no works by Texas artists were included because, "the Lone Star State has so many fine artists the practical limits of space precluded that"¹⁶¹ (fig. 5.20).

1964

■ For the first time since the inaugural 1939 show, the *Star-Telegram* does not report on the winners of the Local.

April 13, 1964

■ Kay Kimbell dies, leaving his art collection and his fortune to the Kimbell Art Foundation to “further the arts.”¹⁶²

May 12–31, 1964

■ The FWAC shows works from Dallas collectors Mr. and Mrs. S. Allen Guiberson. Mrs. Guiberson is the former Betty McLean.¹⁶³

August 3–30, 1964

■ Scott Gentling (1942, Rochester, Minnesota–2011), a former FWAC student now attending PAFA, has a solo show in the Members Lounge at the FWAC.¹⁶⁴ Gentling later returns to Fort Worth and with his twin brother Stuart (1942, Rochester, Minnesota–2006) forms the nexus of a new generation of local artists.¹⁶⁵

October 1964

■ After a flood damages Valley House, Cantey organizes a fundraiser.¹⁶⁶

January 17, 1965

■ Gentling’s portrait of the regionalist painter Thomas Hart Benton appears in the *Star-Telegram*. Benton is in town visiting John Paxton and his family.¹⁶⁷

January 23–March [31], 1965

■ Valley House hosts a major exhibition of Williams’s works.¹⁶⁸

April 1965

■ John Paxton places a Williams sculpture on the cover of his company’s spring catalog.¹⁶⁹

May 2–23, 1965

■ The Oklahoma Art Center organizes a two-man show of Williams’s sculptures and paintings by Gene Bavinger (1919, Sapulpa, Oklahoma–1997, Norman, Oklahoma).¹⁷⁰ Williams makes landscape sculptures and interior decorations for the Bavingers’ house, designed by Bruce Goff.¹⁷¹

September 1965

■ Williams contributes the catalogue introduction for an exhibition of the Weiner collection in Wichita. It travels to Oklahoma City in November.¹⁷²

November 11–[28], 1965

■ Valley House shows Scott Gentling’s work for the first time in a group exhibition, *Contrasts: The Chosen Ones*.¹⁷³ The Vogels give Gentling a solo show the next March.

December 1, 1965

■ Williams plans to fly to Mexico City with Keen and Love “to see the museum,” possibly referring to the National Museum of Anthropology, which opened a new modern building in September 1964.¹⁷⁴

March 30, 1966

■ Williams dies of a heart attack.¹⁷⁵ He is buried with Louise in Wichita.¹⁷⁶

BY THE END OF 1972

■ The ACMWA expands its mission to American art (1967).¹⁷⁷

■ Henry Hopkins, formerly of LACMA, becomes the FWAA director (1968) and organizes the US Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, sponsored by the FWAA and the Smithsonian (1970).¹⁷⁸

■ The Kimbell Art Museum, designed by Louis Kahn and directed by Richard F. Brown, opens (1972).¹⁷⁹

■ The *Star-Telegram* Gallery Calendar covers a full column of text and lists nearly fifty galleries, Carlin, Collins, and Lon Hellums still among them.¹⁸⁰

■ Weiner announces that he has been unable to donate his gardens to the city of Fort Worth, so most of the collection will go to Palm Springs (1971).¹⁸¹

■ Meeker, no longer the *Star-Telegram's* art critic, becomes an “important collector,” loaning Ed Ruscha’s *Standard Station* to the FWAC (1972). Later that year, he hosts an exhibition of Scott and Stuart Gentling’s works as a fundraiser for the FWAC.¹⁸²

■ Douglas MacAgy comments on Williams, “As an artist, a man with swinging curiosity and surprise perceptions, as a generous friend and relaxing host, the late Charles Williams was a key figure in bringing [Texas contemporary artists] together” (1971).¹⁸³

NOTES

1. Reba Oglesby, "History of the Fort Worth Art Association" (Master's Thesis, Texas State College for Women, 1950), 20–21.
2. Artists' birth and death dates appear in parentheses. All take place in Fort Worth unless otherwise specified. "Fort Worth Circle" designates a loosely defined group of friends and colleagues who worked in a variety of mediums and styles. Many more artists than those listed here were involved in the group. For more on the Fort Worth Circle, see *Intimate Modernism: Fort Worth Circle Artists in the 1940s* (exhibition catalogue), ed. Jane Myers (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum, 2008).
3. Standard Certificate of Birth, Charles Truett Williams, March 28, 1918 (Austin: Texas Department of State Health Services microfiche); and US Census Bureau, "1920 Census;" both at Ancestry.com. Some sources erroneously indicate Williams was born in Mineral Wells.
4. Pauline Naylor, "Public School Art Work to Be Shown," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 24, 1929, 7.
5. Scott Grant Barker, "An Unconventional Vision: Remembering the Fort Worth Circle," in *Intimate Modernism: Fort Worth Circle Artists in the 1940s* (exhibition catalogue), ed. Jane Myers (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum, 2008), 13; Scott Grant Barker, "Evaline Sellors Oral History Transcript (unpublished manuscript)," 2002, 20, Amon Carter Museum of American Art Oral History Archives.
6. "Old Masters to Be Here on Thursday for Twelve-Day Exhibition," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 12, 1935, 11; "Beechey Painting Bought by Kimbell" (photo), *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 2, 1935, 5.
7. "Rogers Wanted Remington Work," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 22, 1961, 43.
8. "Application for Federal Employment," June 7, 1948, 3, in Army Corps of Engineers Records [1] folder; and "Record or Request for Approval of Promotion and/or Reassignment," June 28, 1943, in Army Corps of Engineers Records [3] folder; both Charles Truett Williams Papers, Amon Carter Museum of American Art (hereinafter, "ACMAA Williams Papers").
9. Scott Grant Barker, "Karl Williams Oral History Transcript" (unpublished manuscript), 2021, 2, Amon Carter Museum of American Art Oral History Archives.
10. "Request for Promotion," 2.
11. "Request for Promotion," 2. Some sources say Williams attended Abilene Christian University. A Charles H. Williams appears in the 1940 and 1941 Abilene Christian yearbooks, but he is from San Antonio and bears little resemblance to Charles T. Williams.
12. Ida Belle Hicks, "Art Prize Winner Is Announced," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 4, 1939, 20; Oglesby, "History of the FWAA," 107. Reeder's paintings take first in 1941, 1943, and his print in 1952; Utter's paintings in 1942, 1946, 1949, and 1953 and his drawings in 1948, 1950, and 1953; Bomar's paintings in 1944 and 1948; Fearing's in 1945; Helfensteller's print in 1946 and her drawings in 1947 and 1949; McVeigh's prints in 1947, 1948, and 1950; and Brants' paintings in 1950, 1952, and 1956. Evaline Sellors takes firsts in sculpture in 1941, 1947, 1950, and 1952. The group also wins numerous seconds, thirds, and honorable mentions. The name of the exhibition changed frequently. The first year it was called the Fort Worth Artists Exhibition. It was subsequently known as the Annual Local Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture, Artists of Fort Worth, the Annual Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture by Artists of Tarrant County, the Annual Tarrant County Show, the Annual Exhibition for Artists of Fort Worth and Tarrant County, the Tarrant County Annual, and other variations. There was no local show in 1959, 1972, or 1974. From 1975–77, it was the Southwest/Tarrant County Annual. This and other exhibition and award histories have been reconstructed from exhibition histories in the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth Archives, exhibition catalogues, and *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* coverage of the show.
13. Scott Grant Barker, "Promises Made and Kept," in *First Light: Local Art and the Fort Worth Public Library 1901–1961* (exhibition catalogue) (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Public Library, 2001), v.
14. Leon Wilson, "The History of the TCU Art Department Through 1969" (MFA Thesis, Texas Christian University, 1970), 115–16, TCU Art History Department Archives.
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21. "West Texas Art Show Opened as Climax to Meeting of Fort Worth Association," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 4, 1942, 2.
22. Barker, "An Unconventional Vision," 26; Nedra Jenkins, "Cantey Art Collection to Be Shown in Denton," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 10, 1952, 50.
23. "Sam Cantey III Dies at Age 59 in Mexico" (obituary), *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 5, 1973, 2.
24. Katie Robinson Edwards, *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas, 2014), 123.
25. Ida Belle Hicks, "Work of Blanche McVeigh to Be Shown by Art Association in One-Man Exhibit," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 2, 1943, 32. Some sources date the McVeigh show to 1942. Helfensteller has the honor in 1944, Reeder in 1945, Utter in 1946, Bomar in 1947, and Sellors in 1948.
26. "Application for Federal Employment," 2-3. If these documents are accurate, Williams was in Virginia on June 6, 1944, and did not land at Omaha Beach on D-Day as mentioned in Karl Williams's oral history. A request for Williams's military records from the National Archives remains pending at the time of publication.
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31. "Progress, School, Pension Bonds Are Voted by Landslide Majority," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 3, 1945, 1.
32. R.S. Walsh Jr., Chief, Personnel Branch, to Charles T. Williams, August 7, 1947, in Army Corps of Engineers Records [3] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
33. "Louise B. Williams," Georgia, US, Death Index, 1919-1998, Ancestry.com; Karl Williams, conversation with the author, April 6, 2022.
34. Barker, "Karl Williams Oral History," 3; Edward E. Anton, "War Department Notification of Personnel Action," October 1, 1947, in Army Corps of Engineers Records [1] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers.
35. Wilson, "History of TCU Art Department," 127-28.
36. Robinson Edwards, *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas*, 270.
37. Anton, "War Department Notification of Personnel Action."
38. Karl Williams, conversation with author, April 6, 2022.
39. Robinson Edwards, *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas*, 129; Donald S. Vogel, *Memories and Images: The World of Donald Vogel and Valley House Gallery* (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 2000), 124.
40. Williams arrived in Fort Worth too late for the 1947 fall semester, and the *Star-Telegram* lists him among the TCU students in a show in summer 1948.

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46. Nedra Jenkins, "GI Student Art Exhibit on Display at Library," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 6, 1948, 20.
47. Wilson, "History of TCU Art Department," 157.
48. "Six Known Dead, Thousands Homeless; Flood One of Worst in Fort Worth's History," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 18, 1949, 1.
49. Barker, "Karl Williams Oral History," 7.
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51. Wilson, "History of TCU Art Department," 136, 157; "Statue in Progress..." (photo caption), *The Skiff*, October 3, 1952, 3, repository.tcu.edu; "Leonard Marion Logan," US Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936-2007, Ancestry.com.
52. Mark Andrew White, *Macrocosm/Microcosm: Abstract Expressionism in the American Southwest* (exhibition catalogue) (Norman, OK: Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, The University of Oklahoma, 2014), 26-27; Charles T. Williams, "Sculpture Log 1952-1964," n.d., 7, ledger in ACMAA Williams Papers.
53. *Local Artists Show* (exhibition catalogue) (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Association, 1949); *Local Show* (exhibition catalogue) (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Association, 1950).
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55. Nedra Jenkins, "Fort Worth Art Circles," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 19, 1947, 37.
56. Nedra Jenkins, "Library Gallery Is Too Hot for Summer Shows," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 18, 1950, 62.
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59. Mark A. Castro, *Octavio Medellín: Spirit and Form* (exhibition catalogue) (Dallas: Dallas Museum of Art, 2022), 13, 57-58; Nedra Jenkins, "Notes on Art, Art Circles," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 19, 1950, 58.
60. Nedra Jenkins, "Cynthia Brants Will Be Presented in One-Man Show by Art Association," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 26, 1950, 16.
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71. "10 Artists Here Have Works Accepted for Houston Show," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 21, 1951, 57.
72. Nedra Jenkins, "Notes on Art, Art Circles," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 11, 1951, 52.
73. Karl Williams, conversation with the author, April 6, 2022.
74. Charles T. Williams to Sidney Berkowitz, Neiman Marcus (carbon copy), January 28, 1952, in microfilm reel 1800, AAA Williams Papers.
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77. Nedra Jenkins, "Notes on Art, Artists and Art Circles," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 19, 1952, 56.
78. Texas Christian University, *Commencement Program*, August 26, 1955, 5, repository.tcu.edu.
79. Nedra Jenkins, "Painters of Texas and Southwest Will Be Stressed in Art Exhibits," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 6, 1952, 48; Nedra Jenkins, "6th Graders to Share in Art Appreciation," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, September 28, 1952, 32.
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82. Nedra Jenkins, "Notes on Artists and the Art World," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 6, 1953, 66.
83. Robinson Edwards, *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas*, 211.
84. *Weiner Sculpture Collection* (exhibition catalogue) (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Art Center, 1965); Janet Tyson, "The Spark," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, [1998], 2, clipping in Williams, Charles folder, ACMAA Artist Files; Charles T. Williams, "The Design and Execution of a Fountain Sculpture" (MFA Thesis, Texas Christian University, 1955).
85. Williams, "Sculpture Log 1952-1964," 18-21.
86. Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, *Some Sculptors of the Region* (unpublished exhibition checklist), 1954, dma.org; Nedra Jenkins, "Notes on Artists and the Art World," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 2, 1954, 26.
87. Nedra Jenkins, "Fort Worth Sculptor Top Winner at New Orleans," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 28, 1954, 50; Nedra Jenkins, "Fort Worth Art Works Travel in Top Company," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 20, 1954, 29; *16th Annual Local Artists Show* (exhibition catalogue) (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Association, 1954).
88. *Younger American Painters* (exhibition catalogue) (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1954), www.archive.org.
89. White, *Macrocism/Microcism*, 13.
90. Nedra Jenkins, "Art Center Opening Marks Advance in Prestige, Good Will for Fort Worth," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 10, 1954, 70.

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92. "Art Graduate" (photo caption), *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 27, 1955, 55.
93. Robinson Edwards, *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas*, 231.
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95. Nedra Jenkins, "Notes on Art and Artists," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 17, 1955, 50.
96. Barker, "Sellors Oral History," 35.
97. Nedra Jenkins, "Notes on Art and Artists," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 24, 1955, 50; Donald Vogel, *Donald S. Vogel* (exhibition catalogue) (Dallas: Valley House Gallery, 1969).
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100. "Carter Estate Left for Public's Benefit," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 1, 1955, 1.
101. Calvin A. Cumbie, TCU Registrar, to Charles Williams, August 1, 1955, in microfilm reel 1800, AAA Williams Papers; Texas Christian University, *Commencement Program*, 1955, 4; W.J., "Notes on Art and Artists," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 19, 1955, 36.
102. Karl Williams, conversations with the author, February 11, 2022 and April 6, 2022; Nedra Jenkins, "Sculptor Makes Return to Wood from Metal," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 8, 1957, clipping in microfilm reel 1801, AAA Williams Papers; Williams, "Sculpture Log 1952-1964," 21; Charles T. Williams to Charlie, September 17, 1955, in microfilm reel 1800, AAA Williams Papers.
103. Nedra Jenkins, "Art Center's Program Has Several Highlights," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, September 11, 1955, 61.
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107. *Sculptors of Texas* (exhibition catalogue) (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Association, 1957).
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109. Douglas MacAgy, *one i at a time* (exhibition catalogue) (Dallas: Pollock Galleries, Meadows School of the Arts, Southern Methodist University, 1971), 9.
110. "Turnout for Art in Texas," *LIFE*, April 29, 1957, 168.
111. Rual Askew, "Splendid Vision Realized," *Dallas Morning News*, May 3, 1957, clipping in microfilm reel 1801, AAA Williams Papers; Nedra Jenkins, "Notes on Art and Artists," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 19, 1957, 54.
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113. Owen Day, "Turnpike to Feature 'Two Cities' Mosaic," *Fort Worth Press*, August 25, 1957, 10B, clipping in microfilm reel 1801, AAA Williams Papers; Williams, "Sculpture Log 1952-1964," 29.
114. *The Sculpture of Charles Williams* (exhibition catalogue) (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Association, 1957).
115. "Bill of Sale to Stanley Marcus," January 5, 1958, in microfilm reel 1801, AAA Williams Papers.

- 116.** Victor J. Hammer to Charles Williams, January 16, 1958, in microfilm reel 1801, AAA Williams Papers. Williams never did anything with the jade, although given his interest in Mesoamerican cultures, it must have tantalized him (Karl Williams, conversation with the author, April 6, 2022).
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- 119.** "TWC Graduate to Return, Head School Art Department," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, August 10, 1958, 32.
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- 123.** Lloyd Stewart, "Two Art Galleries Set Formal Openings Today," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 1, 1959, 54; Lloyd Stewart, "Wonderful Things Gallery Will Open at New Location," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, September 20, 1959, 52; "Gallery Calendar," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 10, 1960; "Ellison Gallery Exhibit Outstanding," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 19, 1959, 57.
- 124.** "Gallery Calendar," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 15, 1959, 38.
- 125.** This history has been reconstructed from *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* art pages.
- 126.** Barker, "Karl Williams Oral History," 12; Williams, "Sculpture Log 1952-1964," 54.
- 127.** Lloyd Stewart, "Notes on Art and Artists," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 28, 1960, 68.
- 128.** Williams, "Sculpture Log 1952-1964," 55.
- 129.** *The Sculpture Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Ted Weiner* (exhibition catalogue) (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Association, 1959).
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- 131.** "In Nye Sculpture Show" (photo caption), *Dallas Morning News*, March 23, 1960, clipping in microfilm reel 1801, AAA Williams Papers.
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- 135.** Lloyd Stewart, "Art Association Purchases Slowed by Lack of Funds," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, August 28, 1960, 63.
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- 138.** Lloyd Stewart, "Painter, Sculptor Join in Show," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 27, 1960, 38.
- 139.** Jack [Boynton] to Charlie and Anita [Williams], December 1, 1960, in microfilm reel 1801, AAA Williams Papers.
- 140.** "First Catalog like Book at Western Art Museum," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 22, 1961, 45; Lloyd Stewart, "Amon Carter Museum Draws Foreign Visitors," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 19, 1961, 35; Lloyd Stewart, "Western Art Museum Ready to Open," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 22, 1961, 1.
- 141.** Lloyd Stewart, "Today Last Chance to See Lea Show," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 5, 1961, 29.

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144. Lloyd Stewart, "Two Leaders Join Art Community," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, August 6, 1961, 50.
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162. "Kay Kimbell, 77, Food Multimillionaire, Dies," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 13, 1964, 1; "Arts Aided by Kimbell Will," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 16, 1964, 1.
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168. John Neville, "Valley House Sets Major Williams Show," *Dallas Morning News*, January 21, 1965, 23.
169. John L. Paxton, Executive Vice President, Frank Paxton Lumber Company, to Charles Williams, April 27, 1965, in microfilm reel 1803, AAA Williams Papers.
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- 171.** Charles T. Williams, "Sculpture Log 1965-1966," 8, ledger in ACMAA Williams Papers.
- 172.** *Weiner Sculpture Collection*; Patric Shannon, Director, Oklahoma Art Center, to Charles T. Williams, September 22, 1965, in microfilm reel 1803, AAA Williams Papers.
- 173.** John Neville, "Dozier Taking New Directions," *Dallas Morning News*, November 11, 1965, 21.
- 174.** Anita & Charles [Williams] to Karl & Becky [Williams], December 1, 1965, in Correspondence - General [2] folder, ACMAA Williams Papers; "La Institución," Museo Nacional de Antropología - El Museo, accessed April 5, 2022, mna.inah.gob.mx.
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The Art of the Scene: Charles Truett Williams continues the Carter's research into the legacies of underrepresented American artists as part of the mission of the Gentling Study Center. This publication was created using Quire™, a multiplatform publishing tool created by the J. Paul Getty Trust.

p. 6: fig. 2.3, *Package Arrived! Merci Beaucoup*, detail

p. 12: pl. 27, *Fun with Freud*, detail

p. 40: pl. 3, *Torso #2*, detail

An avant-garde existentialist from rural Texas, Charles Truett Williams was a charismatic mix of beatnik and disciplined artist. He brought Atomic Age modern and hip coolness back with him from Europe after World War II to a booming postwar Fort Worth. Rejuvenating the city's art scene with vital new artistic forms, he became the heart of a midcentury studio salon where cocktails mixed simultaneously with art making and philosophy. For eighteen years he was the ringmaster of a milieu that was the prime creative mixer and training ground for many of the best-known artists of twentieth-century Texas. The legacy he created in less than two decades resonates long after his sudden death at age forty-eight.

This book is an intensive study of Williams's art and scene making, utilizing interviews and the extensive Charles Truett Williams Papers held at the Amon Carter Museum of American Art and the Smithsonian. Eminent scholars, in a series of three essays and an accompanying biographical timeline, explore the remarkably under-studied life and world of this midcentury Texas genius.

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