

collection bear approximate dates from the artist's mature years, during the 1940s and 1950s. They are nearly square, a format he favored during this time period.

The artist was asked to continue residing at Duneland Studio even after the state of Indiana bought up lakefront property for inclusion in the new state park in 1923. Most Prairie Club members relocated to Camp Hazelton in Michigan, but Dudley stayed in the Indiana Dunes under a unique rental agreement: he paid the state one large oil painting per year. Due to this arrangement, plus the paintings Maida sold to the state after her husband's death in 1957, the state of Indiana became the largest collector of Dudley's increasingly valuable paintings.

The Indiana State Museum at Indianapolis today holds 72 Dudley paintings. One of these, "Along the Beach" (1946), is included in the museum's current exhibit, "200 Years of Indiana Art: A Cultural Legacy."

While the Brauer Museum is showcasing the Moeller collection, its own collection of 25 Dudley paintings will be on loan to South Shore Arts in Munster, Indiana. These concurrent exhibitions acknowledge Dudley's significance as both an artist and conservationist. During his long career, he played a major role in drawing attention to Indiana's natural resources and advocating for their preservation. Indiana's bicentennial is a fitting occasion for this tribute, particularly since it coincides with the 100th anniversary of both the National Park Service and the Indiana State Park system and the 50th anniversary of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

Barbara Stodola, an experienced journalist and art historian, writes about art for publications in Northwest Indiana. For 15 years, she was director of the John G. Blank Center for the Arts in Michigan City, and prior to that time, was a board member of the Northern Indiana Arts Association in Hammond.

BRAUER MUSEUM OF ART

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Summer hours:

MONDAY: Closed

TUESDAY — SUNDAY: Noon – 5 p.m.

PAINTINGS BY FRANK V. DUDLEY FROM THE JAMES MOELLER COLLECTION

BRAUER MUSEUM OF ART | MAY 17 - AUG. 7, 2016
OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY, MAY 20, 2016, 7 P.M.

VALPARAISO  UNIVERSITY



Frank V. Dudley (1868-1957)
Title Unknown (winter landscape with house), ca. 1913
Oil on canvas, 20 x 30 inches
Moeller Collection

Eleven paintings from various periods of the career of Frank V. Dudley (1868-1957) appear in this exhibition that highlights the fine works acquired over the years by Midwest collector James Moeller. Through key early works to later light-filled landscape scenes, Dudley is well represented by beautiful and significant paintings that expand on the legacy and understanding of this legendary Dunes artist.

We at the Brauer Museum of Art are grateful to James Moeller, Barbara Stodola, and the Partners for the Brauer Museum of Art for making this exhibition possible.

*Gregg Hertzlieb, Director/Curator
Brauer Museum of Art, Valparaiso University*

FRANK V. DUDLEY: THE MOELLER COLLECTION AT THE BRAUER MUSEUM OF ART

By BARBARA STODOLA

In 1816, the year Indiana achieved statehood, the Dunes stood unpopulated and largely undiscovered, their rolling sand hills holding firm against the chilly lake that pressed into the state's northwest corner. Their timeless quality was what Frank Virgil Dudley (1868-1957) sought to preserve in his paintings, and this is the view the Brauer Museum of Art presents to its audience in celebration of Indiana's 200-year anniversary.

Dudley portrayed the majesty and quietude of the Dunes in every season, in calm and threatening weather. He painted at all times of day, capturing the long shadows of early morning, the luminous skies of midday, and the final glow of the setting sun. Several historians have commented on the great variety of images Dudley brought to the hundreds of landscapes he painted in the Indiana Dunes.

James Moeller, a Chicago art collector, has managed to convey the breadth of Dudley's vision in the 11-piece collection he has acquired and loaned to the Brauer Museum at Valparaiso University. While sharing some characteristics with the 25 Dudley paintings the museum owns and previously exhibited, the Moeller collection provides deeper insight into the artist's work, approaching "a mystical experience," in the words of Brauer Museum Director Gregg Hertzlieb.

One sunset is shown in the current exhibit: a pale and subtle painting in which a gently sloping, purplish dune fades into the blurred horizon, and a tapering cirrus cloud trails to the point where daylight is vanishing. The lake is calm. The mood is similar to the painting Dudley named "Psalm XIX, I", often cited as evidence of the artist's reverential attitude toward the heavens.

No people are pictured in the paintings Moeller has collected. Although Dudley sometimes depicted beach-goers, hikers, or fishermen, this exhibit concentrates on the isolated character of the Dunes. When a human presence is suggested, it may take the form of a solitary tree, titled "The Sentinel" and poised watchfully, overlooking the lake. Another device, infrequently used, brings an overhanging branch into the artist's frame of reference, as though the view was framed

by a camera. Other elements suggesting human activity are footpaths, seen in "Forest Trail and Trail's End" (1954). "Winter's Hills" shows tracks winding through snow-blanketed woods toward Mount Tom, glimpsed in the distance.

The earliest work in the Moeller collection is a winter scene, a cozy, tree-shaded house situated near the lake, with clumps of dune grass in the snowy foreground. It is dated c. 1913, a time period when Frank Dudley and his brother, Clarence, were already participating in the Saturday afternoon hiking trips that took nature enthusiasts on excursions to the Dunes and other scenic destinations beyond the city streets of Chicago.

The year 1913 was significant in several other respects in Frank Dudley's life. In May of that year, he married Viola Maidalene Lewis, a talented lyric soprano and voice teacher, and took his bride on a honeymoon cruise down the Mississippi River. It was his second marriage; his first wife died nine years earlier. Frank and Maida spent the summer in the Dunes. He built their "new shack" beside the "old shack" in the Prairie Club encampment, and his 15-year-old son, Paul, came to visit. In 1913, Dudley joined his lifelong friend Jens Jensen, landscape architect, in founding Friends of Our Native Landscape, one of the conservationist organizations he supported for years afterwards.

Even though Dudley had become a well-known landscape artist and participant in Chicago-area exhibits, he had not yet specialized in paintings of the Dunes, commenting on "the monotony of green" he observed during the summers. He was also unable to earn a living strictly from the sale of his paintings. His income came primarily from an art supply and camera shop that he and Clarence operated for years at different locations on Chicago's south side.

It was not until 1921, when Dudley's large painting, "Duneland," won the prestigious Logan Medal at the Art Institute of Chicago, that his career achieved the status he had been working toward. The artist was then 53 years old. He invested the prize-money in the stock market, sold a few more paintings, and was finally able to build a more substantial cottage at Waverly Beach in Porter County. He named it Duneland Studio.

In the early 1920s, Frank and Maida began staying in the Dunes from early spring through Thanksgiving. They had a piano brought into Duneland Studio and regularly held musical events, along with showings of recent paintings. About this time, as historian James Dabbert has noted, Dudley "saw the Dunes in autumn, the season of their glory," and realized he had found his theme.

Autumn colors dominate many of the paintings Dudley produced for the next 30 years, their tawny golden and red hues forming brilliant contrasts to the deep blue water and bleached sand. Even winter scenes retained autumn leaves clinging to trees. The artist would spend hours searching for new angles and subjects, alternating between sweeping views of waves lapping the shore, hilltop panoramas, and detailed depictions of seasonal plants such as Butterfly Weed, with its clusters of orange flowers.

Establishing exact dates for Dudley's paintings is difficult, Hertzlieb points out, because the artist returned to his favorite topics from one decade to another. Most of the paintings in the Moeller