

REFLECTIONS

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Lily Pond by American Impressionist Artist Frank W. Benson

Debbie Walker

I choose the 1923 44 x 36 inch oil on canvas painting, Lily Pond, by American Impressionist artist Frank Weston Benson on long-term loan from the Martin Andersen-Gracia Andersen Foundation, Inc. is the Frank Weston Benson’s painting, Lily Pond. According to an Orlando Museum of Art curator to whom I spoke, the museums collection and will be put back on display in December of 2014 when other traveling exhibits move on.

During the Modern Art period the Impressionist art movement came about when several world events happened at the same time, giving artists time to experiment with new painting techniques. Many of these artists were interested in shape, line, color and value and the law of Pragnanz.

One thing that happened during this time was the Edwardian era of peace and prosperity. Taking advantage of the pastime pleasures, Benson focused his subject matter on of relaxing at the beach, sport waterfowl hunting and reading.

For another thing photography was invented and artists time was freed up to peruse exploring techniques and development of their styles.

For me, Benson’s *Lily Pond* is symbolic for this peacefulness of this time. The calm water represents peace. Viewing the pond you expect to see a dragonfly or hear birds. The blue sky reflects in the pond reminding viewers that times will be better. As your eye wanders to the focal point of light you get a warm and happy feeling come over you.

Benson was part of 10 American artists who in 1898 formed a group called “the Ten,” (2014) which was not affiliated the “Society of American Artists and the National Academy of Design…the Ten were Childe Hassam, John Henry Twachtman, J. Alden Weir, Thomas W. Dewing, Joseph De Camp, Frank W. Benson, Willard Leroy Metcalf, Edmund Tarbell, Robert Reid, and E.E. Simmons” (p. 1).

During the next 20 years Benson was able to study and collaborate with many famous artists who helped define the Impressionist era, which esthetically happens to be one of my favorite styles of art.

Citation

(n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.omart.org/collections/american-art-1945/frank-weston-benson-lily

the Ten. (2014). In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Retrieved from

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/587024/the-Ten>