

= Grandma Moses =

Anna Mary Robertson Moses (September 7 , 1860 ? December 13 , 1961) , known by her nickname Grandma Moses , was a renowned American folk artist . Having begun painting in earnest at the age of 78 , she is often cited as an example of an individual successfully beginning a career in the arts at an advanced age . Her works have been shown and sold in the United States and abroad and have been marketed on greeting cards and other merchandise . Moses ' paintings are among the collections of many museums . The Sugaring Off was sold for US \$ 1 @. @ 2 million in 2006 .

Moses has appeared on magazine covers , television , and in a documentary of her life . She wrote her autobiography , won numerous awards and was awarded two honorary doctoral degrees .

The New York Times said of her : " The simple realism , nostalgic atmosphere and luminous color with which Grandma Moses portrayed simple farm life and rural countryside won her a wide following . She was able to capture the excitement of winter 's first snow , Thanksgiving preparations and the new , young green of oncoming spring ... In person , Grandma Moses charmed wherever she went . A tiny , lively woman with mischievous gray eyes and a quick wit , she could be sharp @-@ tongued with a sycophant and stern with an errant grandchild . "

Starting at 12 years of age and for a total of 15 years , she was a live @-@ in housekeeper . One of the families that she worked for , who noticed her appreciation for their prints made by Currier and Ives , supplied her with art materials to create drawings . Moses and her husband began their married life in Virginia , where they worked on farms . In 1905 they returned to the Northeastern United States and settled in Eagle Bridge , New York . The couple had five children who survived infancy . Her interest in art was expressed throughout her life , including embroidery of pictures with yarn , until arthritis made this pursuit too painful .

= = Early life = =

Born in Greenwich on September 7 , 1860 , Anna Mary Robertson was the third of Margaret Shanahan Robertson and Russell King Robertson 's ten children . She was raised with four sisters and five brothers . Her father ran a flax mill and was a farmer . Moses attended a one @-@ room school for a short period of time as a child . That school is now the Bennington Museum in Vermont which has the largest collection of her works in the United States. She got inspired to paint from taking art lessons at school . Moses first painted as a child , using lemon and grape juice to make colors for her " landscapes " . Other natural materials that she used to create works of art included ground ochre , grass , flour paste , slack lime and sawdust .

She left home and began to work for a wealthy neighboring family at 12 years of age , performing chores on their farm . She continued to keep house , cook and sew for wealthy families for 15 years . One of the families that she worked for , the Whitesides , noticed her interest in their Currier and Ives prints and purchased chalk and wax crayons so that she could create her own artwork .

= = Marriage and children = =

She was 27 when she worked on the same farm as Thomas Salmon Moses , a " hired man . " They were married and established themselves near Staunton , Virginia where they spent nearly two decades , living and working in turn on four separate local farms . To supplement the family income , Moses made potato chips and churned butter from the milk of a cow that she purchased with her savings . Later , the couple bought a farm .

Five of the ten children born to them survived infancy . Although she loved living in the Shenandoah Valley , in 1905 Anna and Robert moved to a farm in Eagle Bridge , New York at her husband 's urging . Thomas Moses died in 1927 of a heart attack , after which her son Forrest helped her operate the farm . She retired and moved to a daughter 's home in 1936 . Anna Mary was known as either " Mother Moses " or " Grandma Moses , " and although she first exhibited as " Mrs. Moses , " the press dubbed her " Grandma Moses , " and the nickname stuck .

= = Decorative arts = =

As a young wife and mother , Moses had been creative in her home by , for example , using housepaint to decorate a fireboard in 1918 . Moses made embroidered pictures of yarn for friends and family beginning in 1932 . She also created beautiful quilted objects , a form of " hobby art " as defined by Lucy R. Lippard .

Moses had developed arthritis by the age of 76 , which made embroidery painful . It was suggested to her by Celestia , her sister , that painting would be easier for her , which spurred Moses 's painting career in her late 70s.when her right hand hurt she switch to her left hand .

= = Art career = =

= = = Style = = =

Moses painted scenes of rural life from earlier days , which she called " old @-@ timey " New England landscapes . Moses said that she would " get an inspiration and start painting ; then I 'll forget everything , everything except how things used to be and how to paint it so people will know how we used to live . " She omitted features of modern life , like tractors and telephone poles , from her works of art .

Her early style is less individual and more realistic or primitive , despite her lack of knowledge of , or perhaps rejection of , basic perspective . Initially she created simple compositions or copied existing images . As her career advanced she created complicated , panoramic compositions of rural life .

She was a prolific painter , generating over 1 @,@ 500 canvasses in three decades . Initially Moses charged \$ 3 to \$ 5 for a painting , depending upon its size , and as her fame increased her works were sold for \$ 8 @,@ 000 to \$ 10 @,@ 000 . Her winter paintings are reminiscent of some such of the known winter paintings of Pieter Bruegel the Elder , although she had never seen his work . A German fan of her work said , " There emanates from her paintings a light @-@ hearted optimism ; the world she shows us is beautiful and it is good . You feel at home in all these pictures , and you know their meaning . The unrest and the neurotic insecurity of the present day make us inclined to enjoy the simple and affirmative outlook of Grandma Moses . "

= = = Initial exhibitions = = =

During a visit to Hoosick Falls in 1938 , Louis J. Caldor , who collected art and worked as an engineer in the state of New York , discovered paintings made by Moses in the window of a drug store . He bought their supply and ten more from her Eagle Bridge house for \$ 3 or \$ 5 each . The next year , three Grandma Moses paintings were included in New York 's Museum of Modern Art exhibition entitled " Contemporary Unknown American Painters " . Her first solo exhibition , " What a Farm Wife Painted , " opened in the same city in October 1940 at Otto Kallir 's Galerie St. Etienne . A meet @-@ and @-@ greet with the artist and an exhibition of 50 paintings at Gimbel 's Department Store was held next on November 15 . Her art displays included samples of her baked goods and preserves that won Moses prizes at the county fair . Her third solo show in as many months , was held at the Whyte Gallery , Washington , D.C. In 1944 she began to be represented by the American British Art Center and the Galerie St. Etienne , which increased her sales . Her paintings were exhibited throughout Europe and the United States over the next 20 years . Otto Kallir established the Grandma Moses Properties , Inc. for her .

Grandma Moses 's paintings were used to publicize American holidays , including Thanksgiving , Christmas and Mother 's Day . During the 1950s , Grandma Moses 's exhibitions broke attendance records around the world . Art historian Judith Stein noted : " A cultural icon , the spry , productive nonagenarian was continually cited as an inspiration for housewives , widows and retirees . " Her paintings were reproduced on Hallmark greeting cards , tiles , fabrics , and ceramics . They were also used to market products , like coffee , lipstick , cigarettes , and cameras .

== Acclaim ==

In 1950 , the National Press Club cited her as one of the five most newsworthy women and the National Association of House Dress Manufacturers honored her as their 1951 Woman of the Year . At age 88 , Mademoiselle magazine named Grandma Moses a " Young Woman of the Year " . She was awarded two honorary doctoral degrees . The first was bestowed in 1949 from Russell Sage College and the second two years later from the Moore College of Art and Design .

President Harry S. Truman presented her with the Women 's National Press Club trophy Award for outstanding accomplishment in art in 1949 . Jerome Hill directed the 1950 documentary of her life , which was nominated for an Academy Award . In 1952 , she published My Life 's History , her autobiography . In it she said " I look back on my life like a good day 's work , it was done and I feel satisfied with it . I was happy and contented , I knew nothing better and made the best out of what life offered . And life is what we make it , always has been , always will be . " In 1955 , she appeared as a guest on See It Now , a television program hosted by Edward R. Murrow .

== Later years and death ==

She was a member of the Society of Mayflower Descendants and Daughters of the American Revolution . Her 100th birthday was named by New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller as " Grandma Moses Day " . LIFE magazine celebrated her birthday by featuring her on its September 19 , 1960 , cover . The children 's book " Grandma Moses Story Book " was published in 1961 .

Grandma Moses died on December 13 , 1961 at 101 years of age in Hoosick Falls , New York at the Health Center . She is buried there at the Maple Grove Cemetery . President John F. Kennedy memorialized her : " The death of Grandma Moses removed a beloved figure from American life . The directness and vividness of her paintings restored a primitive freshness to our perception of the American scene . Both her work and her life helped our nation renew its pioneer heritage and recall its roots in the countryside and on the frontier . All Americans mourn her loss . " After her death , her work was exhibited in several large traveling exhibitions in the United States and abroad .

== Legacy ==

A 1942 piece , The Old Checkered House , 1862 was appraised at the Memphis 2004 Antiques Roadshow . It was not as common as her winter landscapes . Originally purchased in the 1940s for under \$ 10 , the piece was assigned an insurance value of \$ 60 @, @ 000 by the appraiser , Alan Fausel .

In November 2006 , her 1943 work Sugaring off became her highest @-@ selling work at US \$ 1 @. @ 2 million .

The White House owns and displays her painting , Fourth of July . It also appears on a U.S. commemorative stamp that was issued in her honor in 1969 .

The character Granny on the popular 1960s rural comedy television series The Beverly Hillbillies was named Daisy Moses as an homage to Grandma Moses , who died shortly before the series began .

Norman Rockwell and Grandma Moses were friends who lived over the Vermont @-@ New York state border from each other . Moses lived in Eagle Bridge , New York and after 1938 the Rockwells had a house in nearby Arlington , Vermont . Grandma Moses appears on the far left edge in the Norman Rockwell painting Christmas Homecoming , which was printed on The Saturday Evening Post 's December 25 , 1948 cover .

== Collections ==

Some of the public collections of her work are :

Bennington Museum in Bennington , Vermont , holds the largest public collection of Moses 's

paintings

Brooklyn Museum , New York City
Figge Art Museum , Davenport , Iowa
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden , Washington D.C.
Lauren Rogers Museum of Art , Laurel , Mississippi
Maier Museum of Art at Randolph @-@ Macon Woman 's College , Virginia
Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester , New York
Metropolitan Museum of Art , New York City
National Museum of Women in the Arts , Washington D.C.
The Phillips Collection , Washington D.C.
Phoenix Art Museum , Arizona
University of Iowa Museum of Art , Iowa City

= = Works = =

Some of her works are :

Autumn in the Berkshires
Black Horses , 1942
Bondsville Fair , 1945
Catching the Thanksgiving Turkey , San Diego Museum of Art
Dividing of the Ways , 1947 , oil and tempera on masonite , Collection American Folk Art Museum , New York
English Cottage Flower Garden , embroidery
Get Out the Sleigh , 1960 , oil on pressed wood
Haying Time , 1945
Home of the Hezekiah King , 1776 , 1943 , Phoenix Art Museum
Home for Thanksgiving , 1952
Hoosick Falls , 1944 , Southern Vermont Arts Center
Jack ' n Jill
July Fourth , 1951
My Hills of Home , Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester , New York
Out for Christmas Trees
Rockabye , 1957 , Grandma Moses with her grandchildren
The Childhood Home of Anna Mary Robertson Moses , 1942
Thanksgiving Turkey
The Daughter 's Homecoming , oil on pressed wood
The Old Checkered House
The Old Covered Bridge , The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art , Hartford , Connecticut
The Old Oaken Bucket
The Red Checkered House
Turkey in the Straw , c . 1940 , private collection
White Christmas
Winter is Here , 1945