

Anne Bell (American, Born 1935)

Mr. Martin, 1984

Oil

Gift of the Artist, 1989.001

Figurative painter Anne Bell was educated at the University of Georgia and studied at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. Since 1978 she has had numerous exhibitions and portrait commissions. Her method in approaching her subject is unique: "I paint in a realistic and sensitive style which not only portrays my subjects in a realistic fashion, but captures the mood and subtle nuances of the setting." Bell's painting *Mr. Martin* presents a common fixture at the downtown farmer's market. With his portrait, Bell looked to depict "the nostalgia of our lovely market historical area."

*"This painting by Bell tells me loads of stories, to many of which I feel personally connected. I have worked around and for farmers for many years of my post-collegiate life and Mr. Martin's face reminds me of those men and women. Farming is hard work and the subject of the painting indeed looks weary. He could be tired from a long harvest, or from waking up early for a long drive to Roanoke from a West Virginia farmstead. His hands look so comfortable holding and handling the tomatoes; you can tell he has touched millions in his life and is so familiar with the look and shape of a good one. As someone who's been active in the local food scene, this painting reminds me of my deep appreciation of the back-breaking work of the farmer (I mean, look at his back, hunched from years of leaning over his plants!). They work hard to maintain our local food ecosystem, and we would be a less vibrant region without them."*

—Ariel Lev