

Odds Were Against Me

by Martha Oaks

The Cape Ann Museum is fortunate to have a strong collection of artwork and artifacts in its holdings related to women, now and in the past. While many of these items are regularly on display throughout the galleries, this year as people across the country pause to recognize the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage, the Museum is highlighting many of these works and inviting viewers to explore the myriad of stories they reflect about women's abilities and achievements. Anna Vaughn Hyatt Huntington and Katharine Lane Weems, whose work is spotlighted, were two extraordinary artists who excelled at a time and in an art that was not always welcoming of women. In

addition, as the Cape Ann Museum approaches the 150th anniversary of its founding in 2023, the exhibition will also feature artwork by women artists associated with Cape Ann.

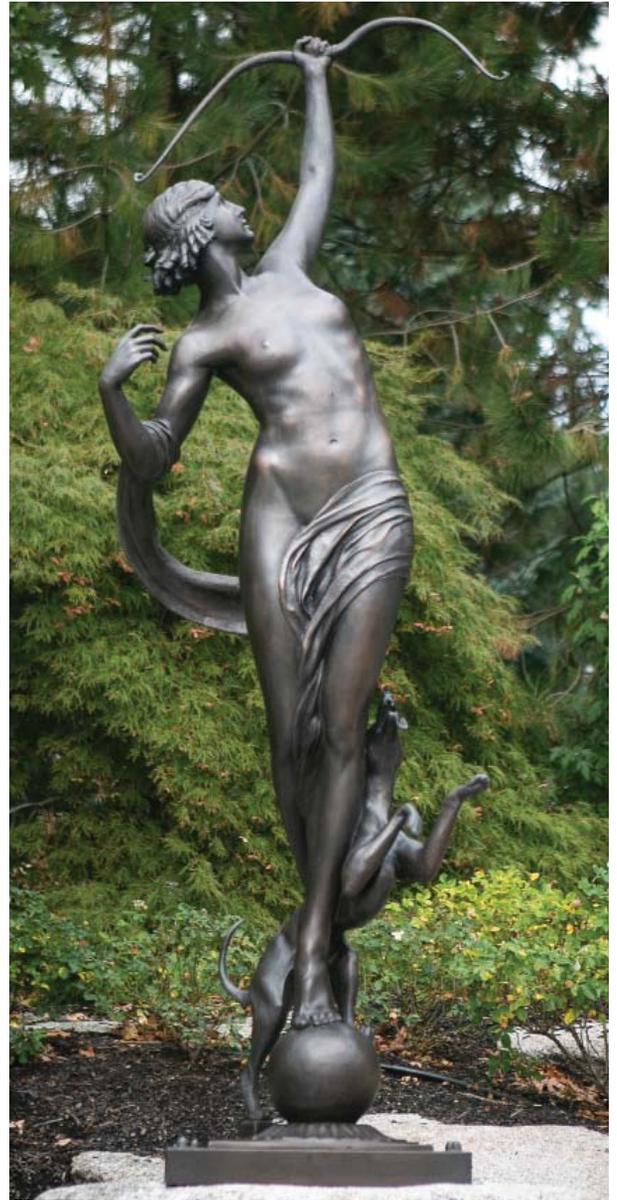
Anna Vaughn Hyatt Huntington (1876-1973) was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her father, Alpheus Hyatt, was a naturalist and mother, Audella Beebe Hyatt, was a watercolorist whose name is found in the circle of women who studied on Cape Ann with William Morris Hunt. The Hyatts purchased a summer house in Annisquam in 1878 where Alpheus ran a biological laboratory and school, open to both men and women. While Anna would study for a short time under Henry H. Kitson in Boston and later with Hermon A. MacNeil at the Art Students League in

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New York, she always thought of herself as a self-taught artist, crediting her older sister, Harriet, with sparking her interest in sculpture when she was in her teens.

In 1902, Anna moved to New York City to pursue her career as a sculptor—a bold move for a woman at that time. She maintained a summer studio on her family's property in Annisquam and strong connections to Cape Ann. In 1907, the young artist traveled to France to continue her work and by the 1910s, had established herself as one of this country's leading





All illustrated images are from the Cape Ann Museum unless otherwise stated.

ABOVE: Marion Boyd Allen, *Portrait of Anna Vaughn Hyatt Huntington*, 1915, o/c, 65 1/8 x 40 3/16, Maier Museum of Art, Randolph College, Lynchburg, Virginia, purchase made possible by the Randolph-Macon Art Association.

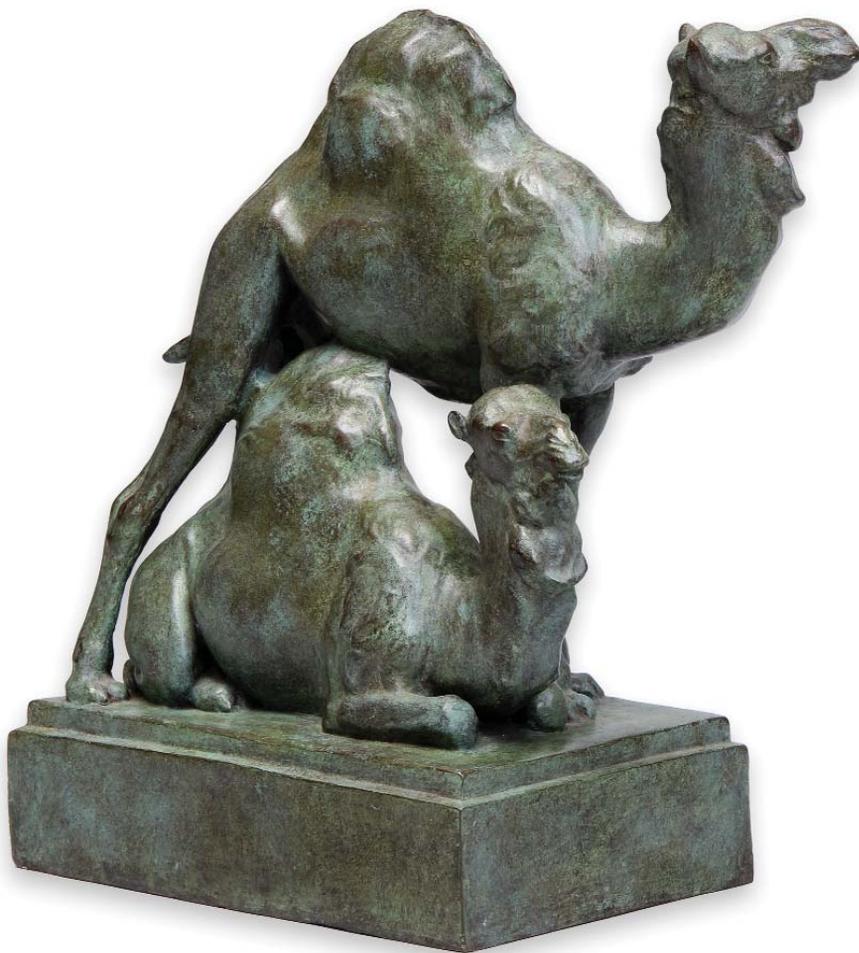
ABOVE RIGHT: Anna Hyatt Huntington, *Diana of the Chase*, 1922, bronze, 96 (h), The James Collection, promised gift of Janet & William Ellery James to the Cape Ann Museum.

RIGHT: Katharine Lane Weems, *Doe and Fawn*, 1927, plaster, 12 1/2 x 11 1/2 x 5 1/2, gift of the estate of Walker Hancock.

LEFT: Charles Hopkinson, *Portrait of Katharine Lane Weems*, 1920, o/c, 39 1/2 x 48 3/8, Tufts University Art Gallery, Aidekman Arts Center, Medford, Massachusetts.

sculptors. In 1916, having already had her work accepted for the 1910 Salon in Paris, Anna was awarded associate membership in the National Academy and in 1923, full membership. That same year, she married Archer Huntington, a wealthy businessman and philanthropist. With





ABOVE: Katharine Lane Weems, *Rabbit*, c. 1945, cast stone, 7 x 5 1/2 x 3 1/2, gift of Walter Hancock.

LEFT: Katharine Lane Weems, *Camels*, 1980, bronze, gift of Louisa and Jonathan Fairbanks.

BELOW LEFT: Anna Hyatt Huntington, *Two Great Cats*, 1902, bronze, 7 1/2 x 10 x 5, gift of Mrs. Elliot Rogers.

ABOVE RIGHT: Cecilia Beaux, *Henry Parsons (Jimmie) King, Jr. (1898-1966)*, 1905, o/c, 72 x 41 1/2, gift of Mary King (Mrs. Henry Parsons King).

ABOVE FAR RIGHT: Emma Fordyce MacRae, *Pigeon Cove*, c. 1930s, oil on burlap, mounted on board, 37 x 46 1/2, gift of Jennifer Kissel, ©A.J. Kissel.

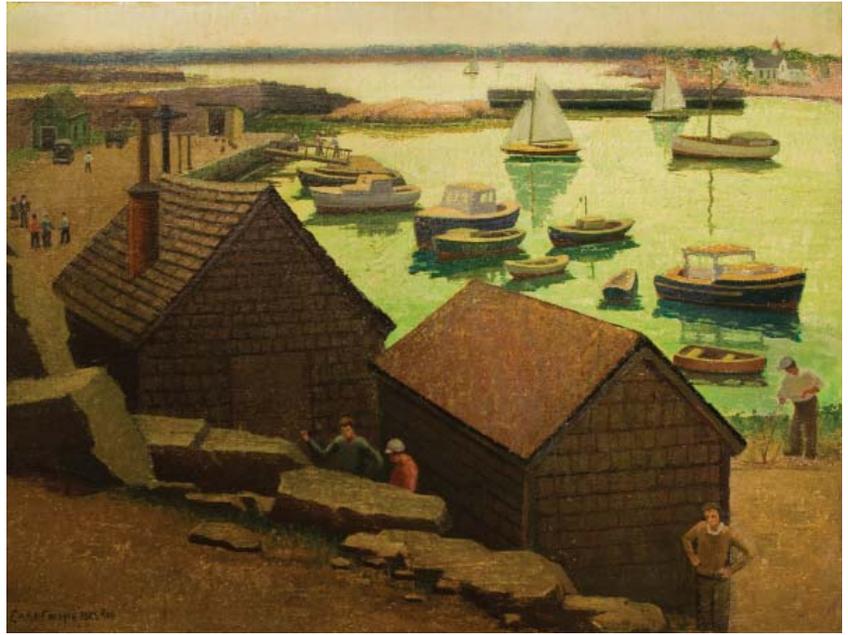
RIGHT: Margaret Fitzhugh Browne, *Portrait of Emily "Bonnie" Browne, the Artist's Sister*, c. late 1920s, o/c, 36 1/2 x 31 1/2, gift of Daniel McDougall.

her marriage, she gave up her Annisquam studio, turning her attention to the development of Brookgreen Gardens in Murrells Inset, South Carolina.

Diana of the Chase was modeled and cast by Huntington in 1922. This sculpture earned Huntington the coveted Saltus Medal at the National Academy of Design and assured her recognition as a full National Academician. *Diana of the Chase* was preceded in 1915 by the work for which Huntington is best known here on Cape Ann: her Joan of Arc memorial, which was presented to the City of Gloucester in 1921 by the French Government and is located in front of the American Legion building on Washington Street.

During the 1930s, Huntington experimented with casting her work in alu-





minum, a material that came into popularity during that time. Despite her willingness to explore new mediums, however, Huntington remained a traditionalist throughout her life, favoring figurative sculpture as others turned to abstraction.

Katharine Lane Weems (1899-1989), along with Huntington, was among the first generation of women sculptors in America and one of the most successful. In 1985, nearing the end of her long and acclaimed career, Weems' memoir, *Odds Were Against Me*, was published. In it she provided insights into the challenges that she and other women of her generation faced as they struggled to gain footholds in the arts. Sculptor Walker Hancock wrote the foreword to the book referring to the accomplishments of Weems, a long-time friend, as a triumph.

Weems was born into a wealthy Boston family who maintained a summer house in Manchester, Massachusetts; the property which included the house (nicknamed *The Chimneys*) and an adjacent studio would eventually become Katharine's. Between 1918 and 1919 she studied sculpture under Charles Grafly at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Grafly was the preeminent portrait sculptor of the time; in addition to Weems he also provid-





ABOVE: Katharine Lane Weems, *Grey Fox*, 1971, bronze, gift of the artist.

LEFT: Theresa Bernstein, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1930s, o/c, 40 x 30, The James Collection, promised gift of Janet & William Ellery James to the Cape Ann Museum.

BELOW LEFT: Katharine Lane Weems, *Pelican*, c. 1940s, bronze, 6 x 5 x 12, gift of Hilary Fairbanks-Burton.

ABOVE RIGHT: Jane Peterson, *Gloucester Inner Harbor*, c. 1920s, o/c, 29 1/2 x 39 1/2, The James Collection, promised gift of Janet & William Ellery James to the Cape Ann Museum.

RIGHT AND FAR RIGHT: Anna Hyatt Huntington, *Water Hole/Africa Medal*, c. 1943, bronze, 3 x 3, gift of Mrs. William H. Robinson.



ed instruction to Walker Hancock, George Demetrios, Paul Manship, and Amelia Peabody, among others. In 1918 while she was attending the Museum School, Weems met Huntington and “succumbed instantly to the charm and warmth of her personality.” Weems studied with Huntington in Boston and Annisquam, and later in New York City where sculptor Brenda Putnam provided lessons in anatomy. Still later, Weems would study with Demetrios.

It was through her work with Huntington that Weems perfected the art of portraying animals in clay, a passion for which “Kay,” as she was known to friends, was widely recognized. One of Weems’ earliest successes was her 1927 bronze *Narcisse*



Noir, a work now at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, which won her the prestigious Widener Gold Medal from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Weems married late in life and continued with her highly successful artistic career for another sixty years.

In 1920, when Weems was just twenty-one-years old, Charles Hopkinson painted her portrait. Hopkinson was a neighbor of Weems in Manchester and a close friend of the family. It was included in the 9th annual exhibition of the National Association of Portrait Painters held at Knoedler Galleries in New York City in 1921 and was singled out as “the most striking” painting in the show. The portrait, which shows Weems as a poised young woman, remained in her possession for many years until it was donated to the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. When the School transferred to Tufts University, the painting came into their possession.

Marion Boyd Allen was born in Boston and began her formal art training in 1902



at the School of the Museum of Fine Art, Boston, where she studied under American Impressionists Frank Benson and Edmund Tarbell. By the 1910s, Allen was exhibiting her work regularly including at the Gallery-on-the-Moors in Gloucester. In 1918 her work was featured in a show at the Copley Gallery in Boston displayed with the work of Anna Vaughn Hyatt Huntington. During this early stage in her career, Allen focused on portraiture. Like many other

women artists of her day, she frequently chose to portray her subjects engaged in work or a specific task.

Allen’s painting, showing Huntington at work in her studio in Annisquam, was displayed at the 1922 annual exhibition at Maier College in Lynchburg, Virginia. Huntington was at the school that year serving as a visiting artist. Her presence at the college generated great enthusiasm which resulted in the school purchasing the

work. Three years earlier, in 1919, the same portrait was exhibited at the Art Association in Newport, Rhode Island, where it was the winner of the “People’s Prize.”

By the 1930s, Allen was maintaining a studio at the Fenway Studios in Boston. Built in 1905, the space was used by many of the city’s best-known artists, many of whom had ties to Cape Ann and the North Shore including Hopkinson, Margaret Fitzhugh Browne and Lilian Wescott Hale. Later in her career, Allen devoted time to painting panoramic landscapes of the American West.

Theresa Bernstein was born in Philadelphia, attended lectures at the Philadelphia Academy and studied at the Philadelphia School of Design for Women and the Art Students’ League in New York. She came to Gloucester for the first time in 1916, “on the advice of a friend.” After her marriage to fellow artist William Meyerowitz in 1919, the couple began spending summers on Cape Ann and winters in New York City, a pattern they would adhere to for years to come. Early on the couple stayed in Gloucester’s Folly Cove neighborhood; in 1924 they purchased property on Mount Pleasant Avenue in East Gloucester, making that their permanent summer home. For nearly ninety years, she was a prominent member of the Cape Ann art colony and one of the most accomplished artists in this country.

Bernstein was among the original members of *The Philadelphia Ten*, a group of women artists (many of whom had trained at the Philadelphia School of Design for Women) who worked and exhibited together from 1917 to 1945—a time when something as ordinary as women artists working and showing their work together was anything but. Other original and early members of *The Philadelphia Ten* included Emma Fordyce MacRae, Fern Coppedge, Isabel Branson Cartwright and Marian MacIntosh. Over the years, as many as thirty women painters and sculptor were associated with the group.

Born in Boston in 1884, Margaret Fitzhugh Browne studied under Joseph DeCamp at the Massachusetts Normal School (now the Massachusetts College of Art) and with Frank Benson at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts. She began showing her work in 1915 and was included in the Vose Gallery’s *First Annual Exhibition of Women Painters of Boston* in 1917.

In addition to painting and exhibiting she wrote art criticism and the book *Portrait Painting*. Browne was commissioned to paint the portraits of such turn-of-the-century luminaries as Henry Ford, John Hayes Hammond Sr., Howard Blackburn, and King Alfonso of Spain, but she would also paint more conventional subjects such as her sister Bonnie. Browne maintained a studio in Annisquam for many years and for over sixty years was a full-time professional artist and art teacher.

Cecilia Beaux is one of the most accomplished and widely regarded artists to work on Cape Ann at the turn of the twentieth century. A native of Philadelphia, she trained at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and at the Académie Julian in Paris; from 1895 to 1915 she taught at the Pennsylvania Academy, the first woman to do so. Beaux first came to Cape Ann with her family in the mid-1880s, staying at the Fairview Inn in East Gloucester. For the summer of 1903, on the advice of a friend, she left the Inn and rented a cottage on Eastern Point; by 1906, construction was complete on Beaux’s new home and studio on the outskirts of the Point. The portrait of young Henry Parsons King, Jr., who was affectionately known as “Jimmie,” was painted by Beaux in 1905, the year before she moved into *Green Alley*, her Eastern Point compound. Beaux was a writer as well as an artist.

The paintings and sculptures showcased in *Odds Were Against Me* are integral to the Museum’s commitment to feature inspiring work of women artists both past and present through special and rotating gallery installations. These women are part of a long line of artists whose work is fundamental to the compelling story of Cape Ann’s evolving artistic and cultural history which resonates with visitors young and old, from the local community and beyond.