About the Cover

Marie Nau Hunter

Interim Director
Museum of Art and Archaeology,
University of Missouri

Cover image: Robert Bussabarger (American, 1922-2013), *Galveston House*, late 1970s-early 1980s, pastels on paper, gift in memory of the artist Robert F. Bussabarger from his family (2014.108)

Attendees of the upcoming NMSG meeting might well encounter scenes similar to the one featured on this journal's cover as they make their way through the state of Texas to San Antonio for the convening. And while the one pictured memorializes a home in Galveston, Tx., situated on the Gulf coast, San Antonio's neighborhoods boast many a Victorian mansion to be admired.

The cover image reproduces a pastel on paper scene by artist Robert Bussabarger, a longtime and well-known resident of Columbia, Missouri. Bussabarger was a faculty member of the University of Missouri's then-termed the Fine Arts Department from 1953 until his retirement in 1991, teaching painting and ceramics to countless undergraduate and graduate students. He died in 2013, after which several of his works were gifted to the Museum of Art and Archaeology, including *Galveston House*.

A 2015 article in the *Columbia Missourian* highlighted how Bussabarger's family distributed much of their patriarch's remaining works of art after his death, and highlighted the artist's long career:

> "Robert Bussabarger was intent on capturing the world around him as soon as he saw it. He could be found drawing intricate doodles on empty Styrofoam cups, beverage napkins or random scraps of paper. During a brief World War II naval tour, Bussabarger carried a sketchbook. He would draw the people and the landscapes he encountered, calling it his visual journey."

Bussabarger's visual journey took him to Texas after he married in 1946 and finished college at Michigan State University. Eventually he landed a job teaching at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Tex., allowing him to explore the state, including Galveston, a city well known for its Victorian architecture. He would have had his pick while visiting the city.

Museum records describe the composition of *Galveston House* as a "view of part of the front of an ornate two-story house in Galveston, Texas. The house and its ... yard are enclosed within a low iron fence[,] [and] [a] stairway with several steps leads up to the house's porch and front door. The...exterior is decorated [in] ornate teal, white, and pink moldings, pilasters, [and] arched openings...[with] [d]ark brown and black tree branches partially obscur[ing] the house's upper level."

If there's time in between neuromuscular study sessions and reports on related drug trials, the architecture of San Antonio is worth taking in, particularly the neighborhoods where one will see many homes like the one in Galveston drawn by Bussabarger.

In 1979, Bussabarger was interviewed by a student reporter at the *Columbia Missourian* about his philosophy as an artist and teacher. He was quoted in a subsequent article as saying: "Whether my work will be forgotten, or I'll be forgotten in connection with it is less important than what I did and that I got all I could out of it at the time." In featuring *Galveston House* as a cover image, NMSG has helped Bussabarger's work to be remembered and enjoyed. Given the many works in our permanent collection and our very limited gallery space, I'm grateful for your selection as it allows us to highlight a work of art that is in storage.

As I have written in past columns, if you are reading this from a screen in central Missouri, or ever find yourself here, please visit the museum. And while Robert Bussabarger's *Galveston House* is not currently on display, there's much to see and enjoy. As always, works of art are best viewed in person, so if you can't visit the Museum of Art and Archaeology (MA&A), I hope you'll take time to darken the door of an art museum near you.

For those of you contemplating a trip to Columbia, Mo., MA&A is located on the lower east side of Ellis Library, with entrances off Hitt Street, Lowry Mall, and from within Ellis. Regular hours during the week are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and noon to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Admission to the museum is always free. Please ask for me if you visit as it would be my pleasure to tour you through the galleries.

For more information about the MA&A, in general, including a calendar of events and a searchable database of the museum's permanent collection of more than 16,000 objects, including several by Robert Bussabarger, visit maa.missouri.edu.

Author's Note: Years ago as a fine arts major at the University of Missouri, I was lucky enough to take beginning watercolor from Robert Bussabarger. It was the semester before I changed my major to art history and archaeology. I am a better art historian because I learned to paint and draw and design from artists like Bussabarger. I remember his class well and still have some of the paintings I made that semester.

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