



THE FREER HOUSE RECOMMENDS



DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS

"Silent Windblown Shrines"

Abbott Thayer and the American Landscape

By Kevin Murphy

Senior Curator of American Art, Williams College Museum of Art

Wednesday, November 30, 6:30 p.m.

LECTURE:

Detroit Institute of Arts

Marvin and Betty Danto Lecture Hall

The lecture is open to the public and no reservation is required

FREE with DIA Admission



Sketch of Monadnock Mountain, 1897, Abbott Thayer
Detroit Institute of Arts

Abbott Handerson Thayer (1849-1921) was one of the most innovative, painterly and enigmatic artists working in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. In 2014, the DIA purchased Thayer's strikingly expressive *Sketch of Monadnock Mountain* (1897) featured above. Speaker Kevin Murphy will focus on this recently acquired painting and Thayer's other landscapes, most of which feature Monadnock Mountain. Murphy will suggest that Thayer created a distinctively modern style of art by combining a scientific interest in optics with a Transcendentalist understanding of the meaning of Nature.

When Abbott Thayer moved away from portraiture after the turn of the twentieth century to concentrate on landscapes, the artist depended heavily on Charles Lang Freer's patronage. Freer, in turn, considered Thayer "a rare genius" and paid extremely high prices for his paintings, like *A Virgin* (1892-1893) featured here; a reproduction of which hangs in the Freer House.*



A Virgin, 1892-1893, Abbott Thayer
Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution
Painting Commissioned by Charles Lang Freer

*Excerpt from: *A Perfect Harmony: The American Collection in the Smithsonian's Freer Gallery of Art, 2013*