



A detail from "William," a 1915 oil on canvas painted by R.H. Ives Gammell. The work is among 40 paintings owned by Provincetown on loan to the de Menil Gallery at Groton School in Groton through Nov. 23.

Provincetown art on loan to gallery

By MARY ANN BRAGG

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A prestigious art gallery northwest of Boston opened a show yesterday of 40 paintings owned by the town of Provincetown, the largest traveling exhibit off-Cape to date, a town official said.

The de Menil Gallery at the private, coeducational Groton School in Groton will show the works through Nov. 23, said gallery director John Tyler.

The gallery has shown art loaned from the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the American Folk Art Museum in New York, and an exhibit of works from the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York is planned, Tyler said.

The Provincetown show captures the variety of the town's eclectic and unpredictable 20th-century collection, Tyler said.

Provincetown is the oldest continuous art colony in the United States, with schools of traditional painting, Impressionist and Abstract Expressionist thriving side by side, according to town records.

By 1916 six art schools were offering classes, and 300 artists and students spent their summers there.

Internationally known Abstract Expressionist Hans

Hofmann opened a summer school in 1934 and taught for 30 years. Impressionist painters Charles Hawthorne and Henry Hensche taught for almost a century combined.

The town's collection includes close to 400 works, said Provincetown Art Commission chairman Stephen Borkowski.

"I think it's a really remarkable collection for a single town to own," said Tyler, a part-time Provincetown resident.

The Groton show will include works by Charles Hawthorne, R.H. Ives Gammell, Blanche Lazzell, William Bicknell, Mary Hackett, Ross Braught, Pauline Palmer, Ada Gilmore, Karl Knaths and more.

The Groton gallery contributed \$2,000 to the town to cover conservation and framing costs, Borkowski said.

The town has loaned smaller groups of paintings to two local museums, he said.

The show is important for the town because some of the collection, which is rotated throughout town buildings, including town hall, will be placed in storage this fall when town hall is closed for safety repairs, he said.

"We're trying to get the works out there and shown," Borkowski said.