

# Chrysler Museum Gathers Hawthorne Paintings For Summer Exhibit Here

A retrospective exhibition of the work of Charles W. Hawthorne will open at the Chrysler Art Museum of Provincetown on June 16 for a three month period.

More than a hundred paintings from important museums and private collections throughout the country have been assembled for this exhibition of paintings by the American artist who, through his work and his art school, was responsible for attracting other artists and art students to Provincetown at the turn of the century and thus unconsciously founded an art colony in the tiny fishing village on the tip of Cape Cod.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the National Gallery of Art, the Carnegie Institute, the Brooklyn Museum, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Museum of Art in both Dallas and Houston, the National Academy of Design, the National Institute of Arts and Letters, are among the lenders to the Hawthorne retrospective, as is the Detroit Institute of Art whose director, Edgar P. Richardson, has written an introduction to the catalog.

The catalog also includes comments by Hawthorne's son, Joseph Hawthorne, who is director of the Toledo Symphony Orchestra and by the artist, Hans Hofmann.

### Great Teacher

Hawthorne, who won major honors and awards during his lifetime, was also recognized as a great teacher. He founded the Cape Cod School of Art in Provincetown in 1899 and taught there until his death in 1930.

An early catalog of the school describes the daily afternoon out-of-doors classes with "a regular model in light summer clothes provided" as an "opportunity of studying the interesting problem of painting white and light colors in the brilliant sunlight."

More advanced students attended studio portrait classes each morning with "models drawn from the Portuguese fisher element" posed "with appropriate accessories to lend color, such as fish, still life and fisherman's sou-westers and oilers."

Edwin Dickinson, who studied with Hawthorne, has written of Hawthorne's exceptional power as a demonstrator. A 1913 school catalog states that "Mr. Hawthorne will paint once a week before the class, either a head or

still life in the studio, or a landscape or figure out-of-doors. In this way will be given a practical illustration of the beginning and completion of a study. These studies will be drawn for, the last Saturday in August, by those students who have studied two months in the school."

### Sea Captain's Son

Hawthorne was the son of a sea captain and grew up in the seaport town of Richmond, Maine. In 1890 when he was eighteen, he went to New York, worked days in a stained glass factory and studied at night at the Art Students League. In 1896 he began to study with William Merritt Chase at Chase's summer art school at Shinnecock.

"His fascination with the sea and the people who worked and lived by it led him to Holland in 1898," according to Joseph Hawthorne, his son. "That next year he went to Provincetown where he found not only an unspoiled fishing village with spectacular contrasts of sand, sea and sky, but also a clarity of atmosphere and a unique quality of light."

Several paintings in the show are on loan from the Town of Provincetown and were presented to the town by Hawthorne in 1915. One is called Cleaning Fish and is a five by four-foot oil done in 1899, the year he went to Provincetown. The other is called The Crew of the Philomena Manta and measures six by seven and a half feet.

### Salty Painter

In the foreword to a 1917 loan exhibition at the Macbeth Gallery in New York, Duhcan Phillips wrote that Hawthorne painted "fisher folk and their catches in their own brine-soaked atmosphere... Nowadays we grant him an original note of poetry, a sympathetic insight into character, a keen comprehension of and compassion for the humble fisher-folk he has painted so often."

The Chrysler Art Museum of Provincetown, where the paintings will be shown, is housed in what was once a Methodist Church at Commercial and Center Streets which was built in the mid-19th century. It was founded by Walter P. Chrysler, Jr., in 1958. It is open daily from 10 to 10 from mid-June to mid-September and from 10 to 5 the remainder of the year.

# Many Determined To Save Painting

By Fred Todd

The future of "The Crew of the Philomena Manta," a painting donated to the Town of Provincetown almost a half century ago by its creator, Charles W. Hawthorne, is still undecided.

The painting, long displayed in the Town Hall, depicts Provincetown fishermen returning with their day's catch. The faces of the local fishermen who posed for the artist are still familiar to old-timers, but their names have already faded. Many wonder if the canvas itself will suffer a like fate.

Town officials will reportedly try again to win an appropriation for the restoration of the large canvas from voters at the annual town meeting next winter.

Following the defeat of a request for \$1,000 to renovate the painting at the special town meeting two weeks ago, there was talk of raising the money by private contributions.

The request for funds, officially Article 11 in the Town Warrant called for "the renovation of the Hawthorne painting" and other paintings owned by the town. After sharp debate, the measure was defeated by a vote of 37 to 16.

The canvas, familiar to townspeople and tourists for over 40 years, was painted by Charles Hawthorne, who is credited with being instrumental in making Provincetown a world-famous art colony. Hawthorne taught in his Cape-tip school from 1899 until his death in 1930.

The deteriorated state of the painting was called to the attention of town officials by Walter Chrysler after the painting was loaned to the Chrysler Museum for the Charles Hawthorne Retrospective exhibition.

### Restoration Recommended

In a letter to the Chairman of Selectmen, John C. Snow, and

Town Manager Walter E. Lawrence, Mr. Chrysler said the painting should be put in the hands of a "competent metropolitan restorer to be entirely relined, restretched, and the present flaking damages properly replaced."

"The town possesses a valuable piece of art," he said, "and should do something to preserve it." The town art commission evaluated the painting at \$5,000, although Mr. Chrysler set its value as "between five and ten thousand".

"The painting is one of Hawthorne's early ambitious works," he said, and because of its historical significance and Hawthorne's importance, its value can hardly be measured in dollars and cents.

Provincetown artists almost unanimously echoed these sentiments. The piece is tied to Provincetown because of the subject and the artist, and the town should be responsible for caring for it, they said.

### Other Side

The artist who spoke against the proposed restoration of the canvas at the Town Meeting, Hen-



Photo by Craig Studio

Painting in question is "The Crew of the Philomena Manta," by Charles W. Hawthorne, given to the Town of Provincetown almost 50 years ago. Although it is valued at between five and ten thousand dollars, and has great historic value, citizens at the Town Meeting recently refused to vote an appropriation of \$1,000 to restore this and other valuable works of art.