

# Quincy

SELECTED  
PAINTINGS







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January 27 – March 11, 2006

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Paintings of Edmund Quincy (1903-1997) courtesy of  
Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

THE TROUT GALLERY / Dickinson College / Carlisle, Pennsylvania

*Cover Image:* Edmund Quincy (1903-1997)  
*Haystacks, Giverny*  
Oil on canvas, 23 1/2 x 28 1/2 inches  
Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

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## Acknowledgments

*The senior Art Historical Methods Seminar is unique among undergraduate programs in art history in that it offers students the opportunity to become curators for a semester wherein they select, research, write a catalogue for, and organize a public exhibition in The Trout Gallery. In the short three and one-half months of the semester, this process always seems a difficult challenge. Not unexpectedly, however, the students rose to the occasion and devoted an enormous amount of energy, time, and enthusiasm not only to the course material for the seminar, but also to researching and writing the entries for this catalogue. The thematic approach, installation design, and idea for organizing the catalogue are the result of their initiative and creativity and they should be proud of the quality of the process and final product. Their sustained industry and good humor throughout the semester has made the seminar exciting to teach, and I would like to extend my congratulations to them on a job well done.*

*This year's seminar topic and exhibition are most unique in the tradition of the Art Historical Methods Seminar in that the works for the exhibition have not been drawn from the permanent collection of The Trout Gallery, but rather have been graciously loaned by the prestigious Hirschl & Adler Galleries in New York City. Thanks to the continued generosity and interest of Eric W. Baumgartner, an alumnus of Dickinson with a major in Fine Arts (class of '79) who is now Director of American Art at Hirschl & Adler, we are privileged to have nineteen paintings by the American artist, Edmund Quincy (1903-1997), as the subject of this year's seminar and exhibition. We extend our sincere appreciation and gratitude to Eric and his staff at Hirschl & Adler. The rare opportunity for current Dickinson students to study and work with this collection of paintings by Quincy has been an invaluable and rewarding experience. Special thanks also go to Zachary Ross, also of Hirschl & Adler, who met with the seminar at Dickinson and engaged the students in a lively discussion about his research on Quincy for Hirschl & Adler's exhibition in 2000, and the vicissitudes of the commercial art world.*

*Many colleagues at Dickinson contributed their time and expertise to the seminar and exhibition. Without their help and interest, the quality of the seminar and the exhibition itself would not have been possible. The students and I especially thank Professor Phillip Earenfight, Director of The Trout Gallery and Associate Professor of Art History, for his enthusiastic support of the seminar and exhibition despite many other professional commitments. My personal thanks to*

*Phillip for also helping with the preliminary selection of paintings along with Eric at Hirschl & Adler this past summer.*

*Most special thanks go to James Bowman, The Trout Gallery Registrar and Preparator, who made the works available for study by the seminar as a whole and on an individual basis for each student when needed. We are also indebted to James for his informed advice and supervision of the installation design and process, which forms an important part of the students' experience in the seminar. My personal thanks also go to James for sharing the responsibility of transporting the paintings from New York to Carlisle and back. We also thank, in advance, Wendy Pires and Dottie Reed for making this exhibition accessible to a wider regional audience through outstanding educational programs offered through the Gallery's Educational Outreach Program.*

*The students were aided in their research by our Art & Art History library liaison, Chris Bombaro, whose expertise, course web-page design, and enthusiasm provided a source of academic and problem-solving support throughout the semester. In the design and publication of this catalogue, the seminar met with Kim Nichols and Pat Pohlman of the Publications Office. The result of their design expertise, practical guidance, and visual conceptualization is this most professional and beautiful catalogue. We can't thank them enough for helping the students to visualize the concepts and ideas they had for this publication. We are similarly grateful to Pierce Bounds for creating clean, crisp images of the paintings in the exhibition without which this catalogue would have no reproductions.*

*Without the patience, expertise, and dedication of Stephanie Keifer, administrative assistant to The Trout Gallery, neither the final editing of the catalogue, invitations, opening reception, and all issues related to the exhibition would happen. The professionalism and clean copy of the catalogue text are largely the result of Stephanie's hard work, and we owe her more than a debt of gratitude.*

*The Members of the Art Historical Methods Seminar,  
Professor Melinda Schlitt, Advisor*

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## Introduction

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This exhibition represents the second public showing of Edmund Quincy's paintings since his last one-man show at the Boston Athenaeum in 1955. Until Hirschl & Adler Galleries mounted a substantial exhibition of Quincy's work in 2000, the legacy of this French-born American artist had been largely forgotten in a storage warehouse outside of Boston where a significant number of his paintings and many personal effects were discovered by chance in 1999. Such a twist of fate can be an art historian's dream and an artist's nightmare. In the first instance, to be able to research and write about an artist for whom there was virtually no scholarship or published criticism to speak of, and in the second instance, to be relegated to obscurity where the vibrant visions of a life's work languished in the darkness of a rented warehouse. For their research on Quincy's art, the student curators were afforded the rare opportunity of unrestricted access to the cache of primary documents (exhibition reviews, letters, exhibition notices, and other personal effects) that were discovered along with the paintings. As Eric Baumgartner rightly noted in his Introduction to the Hirschl & Adler exhibition catalogue, assembling such a collection of primary documents through conventional research techniques would have required an enormous amount of time and effort.<sup>1</sup> And thus for Edmund Quincy (1903-1997), the present exhibition and catalogue not only further cement his reinstatement within the history of twentieth-century American painters, but they also offer a new and different interpretive lens through which his works can be seen and understood.

Based on what we know about Edmund Quincy's life, he seems to have lived free from any significant economic hardship, traveled extensively throughout Europe and the northeastern United States, and drew inspiration for his art from the urban environments and suburban landscapes of the cities in which he lived and visited.<sup>2</sup> Born in France in 1903 to Josiah and Ellen Quincy, Edmund Quincy took his place among one of the oldest and most venerated American families, which included several mayors of Boston, a Harvard president, Abigail Adams, and John Quincy Adams among its many members. After the untimely death of his mother in 1904, his father soon remarried and returned the family to the United States where Quincy began his education at a private boys school in Virginia, later continuing in the footsteps of several of his ancestors by attending Harvard College from 1921 through 1925. While Quincy never received his degree from Harvard, he immediately began studying painting at the Boston Museum School of Art and during the same year, left for Paris late in 1925 having probably been spurred on by one of his instructors, the painter George Loftus Noyes (1864-1954). Once in Paris, Quincy traveled over the next two years to Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and London (where he studied with the well-known British artist,

Frederic Whiting), finally setting down roots in Paris where he would remain for the next several years. In a recollection from some twenty-five years later, Quincy acknowledged the richness of his experiences in Europe more generally when he remarked, "Since that time I have realized that life may be too short to avail one's self of the immense resources with which ages of thought and culture have endowed this land."<sup>3</sup> This kind of reflective insight often resonates in the vibrant immediacy and saturated color palette of many of his urban and landscape scenes, qualities that several of the student curators elaborate upon in their essays.

Quincy sought out further instruction in Paris when he enrolled at the Académie Colorossi in 1927, studying with the French academic painter, Georges-Léo Degorce, and by 1930, he had his first one-man show at the Galerie d'Art Contemporain in Paris. As Zachary Ross noted in his discussion of this exhibition, the predominance of paintings representing Boston would have been seen as a bit unusual in a French gallery at this time, but the work was nonetheless enthusiastically received by both French and American critics largely because of this novelty.<sup>4</sup> Some of the observations in these reviews are revealing for their characterization of the broad qualities and effects of Quincy's art, and they are instructive to mention here. A French critic noted that, "...several canvases painted in America...give an attractive image of that country, not of the tumultuousness of a big city, but an aspect more intimate, more pleasant, more picturesque of his own country."<sup>5</sup> B.J. Kospoth, writing for the Paris edition of the *Chicago Tribune*, though somewhat conservative in his own pictorial tastes, nonetheless aptly underscored the sensibility of Quincy's style and subject matter:

Edmond [sic] Quincy...is one of the young American painters who are helping to destroy the legend that America is not paintable....In other words, Edmond Quincy's canvases help to prove to Europeans that America has an atmosphere and a past....He is happily free from all the freak influences of our time, and while thoroughly modern in spirit, he is satisfied to paint simply and sincerely.<sup>6</sup>

Quincy's career took off after this 1930 exhibition, and a steady stream of shows and growing interest in his work followed. He exhibited in Paris at the Salon d'Automne (1936) and at the Salon des Tuileries (1938), and participated in both one-man shows and annual exhibitions at the Art Association of Newport, Rhode Island, in 1931, 1936, 1937, and from 1941 to 1947. He had a painting included in the annual exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia and in the annual exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC in 1932, and from 1935 to 1946, Quincy was an "artist-member" of the Contemporary Arts Center in New York City, a progressive gallery whose stated purpose was "to form a closer contact between the art-loving public and the creative artist, who has reached mature expression but has not yet

gained recognition.”<sup>7</sup> He continued to exhibit his works through the 1930s and 1940s at prestigious venues like the Art Institute of Chicago’s annual exhibition, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh.

By 1948, Quincy had returned to Europe to live in Italy with his wife and young son and his artistic career began to slow down considerably. He had sporadic exhibitions between 1950 and 1952 in Venice, Turin, Bordighera, and Naples, and three shows in Paris between 1952 and 1953 at the Salon d’Automne and Galerie Marseille, respectively. The exhibition at the Boston Athenaeum in 1955 was a retrospective of Quincy’s work, and it would be his last show until the year 2000 at Hirschl & Adler Galleries, New York City.

After 1955, Quincy had stopped painting and moved back to Europe with his family where he began to focus on writing poetry and short stories. While two volumes of his poetry with original illustrations were published in Italy in 1956 and 1957, and other poems were of sufficient quality to be published in literary journals during the 1970s, he became increasingly involved in civic activism dedicated to the cause of historic preservation beginning in the early 1960s. He returned to Boston during that time and dedicated himself to the cause of fighting developers and the urban modernization of Boston in an attempt to preserve its historic neighborhoods. When his efforts and those of other like-minded activists ultimately failed, he returned to Italy where he remained for the rest of his life. It seems that from the mid-1950s on, he never painted again.

In their essays, the curators explore four interrelated “themes” that emerged during their research and analysis of Quincy’s paintings throughout the semester, and which they argue are the most dominant pictorial characteristics of Quincy’s artistic vision. Each of these “themes” depends upon the other three for its viability, functioning in both a referential and active context with respect to the dialogue between image and viewer. The quality of “temporality” defines this dialogue in a variety of compositional and framing devices inspired by techniques that were often used in photography and film, and which also evoked paintings by some of Quincy’s contemporaries like Edward Hopper, Charles Burchfield, and the much older Childe Hassam. Quincy’s compositions create the energy of a fleeting moment through oblique angles, perspectival imbalance, and the viewer’s curiosity to see what is implied beyond the frame.

“Character of place” is a quality that resonates in virtually all of the paintings in this exhibition and was not infrequently mentioned by reviewers during the 1930s and 1940s as one of the most successful effects of Quincy’s imagery. Rich hues and warm tonalities together with a variety of paint applications, project the unique personality of each cityscape, landscape, and interior. The curators also recognized that Quincy’s often complex colorism and paint application were reminiscent of many techniques most readily associated with French Impressionist

painters. In this recognition of Quincy’s “impressionist” gestures, they also elaborated upon some of the more perceptive observations that were occasionally made by reviewers during the height of Quincy’s productivity: “Edmund Quincy has miraculously transplanted the light of France and filtered it through his Boston studio windows. Worked up over the past year from sketches actually made abroad, the oils at Contemporary Arts swim in the soft luminosity of a school whose greatest exponent was Corot.”<sup>8</sup>

The fourth theme is that of the relationship between the “artist and viewer,” or reciprocal “spectatorship,” wherein the artist as observer and the viewer as observer meld into a single act of vision. The conviction and vibrancy with which Quincy represented what he chose to see become pictorial realities for the viewer, and the viewer takes the place of the painter before the scene.

The art historian’s dream I alluded to earlier, being able to research and write about an artist for whom there was virtually no scholarship or published criticism to speak of, can also be a daunting challenge when limited time, restricted resources, and deadlines constrain one’s choices and options. The student curators have indeed done a laudable job in coordinating their research and synthesizing their essays around the four themes they identified for this exhibition and catalogue, an accomplishment that is all the more remarkable since not one of the paintings is dated. Perhaps the most salient interpretive gesture on the part of the curators lies in their formulation of the exhibition and catalogue title. The artist’s own signature, “Quincy,” enlarged and unqualified, proclaims his art and identity in a bold, tactile brushstroke—and like so many other recognized artists who are known only by their last names, so too the rediscovered legacy of Edmund Quincy has given a new generation of viewers an artistic vision they had never seen before.

Melinda Schlitt, Associate Professor, Art & Art History

1. Eric W. Baumgartner, “Introduction,” in Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 3.
2. The material for my biographical summary of Quincy is drawn from the illuminating essay by Zachary D. Ross in the Hirschl & Adler exhibition catalogue. See Ross, 7-29.
3. Edmund Quincy, in *Harvard Class of 1925 Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Report* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Printing Office, 1950), 791, as cited in Ross, 12.
4. Ross, 14-17.
5. “L’Exposition Edmond Quincy,” *Comoedia* 635 (June 7, 1930): 3, as cited in Ross, 14.
6. B.J. Kospoth, “Edmond Quincy’s American Paintings,” *Chicago Tribune (Paris Edition)*, June 1, 1930, n.p., as cited in Ross, 18.
7. Emily A. Francis, as quoted in “Contemporary Arts Reopens,” *Art Digest* VII, no. 7 (January 1, 1933): 15, as cited in Ross, 18.
8. “The Passing Shows,” *The Art News* XLIV, no. 6 (May 1-14, 1945): 29, as cited in Ross, 25.

*Street Scene, Boston, n.d.*

Oil on canvas, 29 x 37 in. (73.7 x 94 cm)

Signed: l.r.: Quincy; c.b.: Edmund Quincy "The Painter," 4 Charles River Square, Boston, MA

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 6, 33, cat. 8.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

Among the variety of subjects that he painted throughout his career, Edmund Quincy produced a large number of images of Boston. Quincy was born in Boston to a prominent family of political leaders, and his ancestors played a significant role in the foundation and development of this city.<sup>1</sup> Despite his frequent travels throughout Europe and his eventual relocation to Italy, Quincy always considered Boston his home, carrying with him a deep appreciation for the city. As one critic noted in a 1930 review of Quincy's first one-man show, "himself a Bostonian, he [Quincy] feels the appeal of his native city with all the reverence and fervor of one whose family has lived there for eight generations."<sup>2</sup> One of Quincy's many depictions of Boston in which he effectively and vividly captured the character of his native city is *Street Scene, Boston*.

*Street Scene, Boston* presents a bustling city street on a sunny afternoon, filled with automobiles, people, shops, and buildings. The cityscape is seen from an aerial point of view with the spectator looking down onto the city. Quincy's vantage point, along with the strong, one-point perspective, produce a dynamic spatial construction that imbues the painting with a sense of movement. In addition to the sharp diagonal that runs through the picture, one of the most striking features of this work is its intensely saturated palette. Quincy's bright greens, oranges, pinks, and blues enhance the activities that are illustrated and add to the excitement of the scene. Together, the various elements in *Street Scene, Boston* brilliantly capture the character of Boston in the early twentieth century, creating a unique sense of place that celebrates the very city in which Quincy grew up.

The composition that dominates Quincy's cityscape is markedly similar to that found in contemporary photography of the time. By the turn of the century, new advancements were being made in the world of photography, and these developments began to affect artistic production in other areas, specifically painting, as painters tried to emulate the compositional arrangements achieved by the photographic lens. Edward Hopper, an American Realist and contemporary of Quincy, was inspired by photographs and movie stills of the 1920s and he deliberately used certain photographic techniques in his work to achieve similar, documentary-like compositions.<sup>3</sup> Many of Hopper's images are presented from unusual vantage points and

are strongly cropped, enabling him to depict fragmented images of life that seem to capture a specific moment in time. Quincy was familiar with the work of Hopper, as the two artists exhibited together in at least three exhibitions, and it is likely that Hopper's compositional choices influenced Quincy's own work.<sup>4</sup>

In urban photographs of Boston from the 1920s and 1930s, the city is almost always presented from above, with the streets and buildings seen at various angles.<sup>5</sup> The vantage point and perspective of these images directly mirror those found in Quincy's work. In addition, Quincy's *Street Scene, Boston* has a strongly cropped composition that is similar to the cropping often associated with photography from this period. On all four sides of his painting, Quincy has arbitrarily cut off the image. Figures are in mid-stride, cars are driving down the street, and most significantly, the trolley is disappearing into the distance with the front of its car cut out of the picture. All of these elements emphasize the temporality of the image, and together with the perspective and cropping, suggest that life extends both in time and place outside of the picture plane.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the changing nature of the American city led many artists to turn to the urban scene as subject matter for their work. Childe Hassam was an American artist working around the turn of the century who often painted images of his native city, New York. Hassam's cityscapes, though very different in style from those of Quincy, encapsulate the "everyday" character of New York City, presenting glimpses into urban life that parallel Quincy's own images of Boston. Both Quincy and Hassam participated in the Corcoran Gallery of Art's biennial in 1932, so Quincy would have been familiar with Hassam's work. In Hassam's *Fifth Avenue in Winter* from 1892, the artist portrays an image of urban life on a snowy day in New York City. From an aerial point of view and with a sharp, diagonal perspective, analogous to that in Quincy's composition, Hassam presents carriages moving down the street and people with umbrellas out for a stroll. This painting shares the temporality that pervades Quincy's cityscape, as it has a cropped composition and portrays figures and carriages caught in momentary actions.

Quincy's *Street Scene, Boston* can be described as encouraging and celebratory. Its bright, jovial atmosphere, which is achieved through Quincy's choice of imagery, composition, and palette, conveys an optimistic message about contemporary life in Boston. In a recent publication on the work of Quincy, Zachary Ross argued that Quincy was a painter who appreciated the lifestyle of old-world cities and who subsequently infused his images with a "spirit of the past." Ross writes, "Quincy's views of city spaces reveal a longing for a past free of the hustle and bustle of the modern age. His canvases are sensitive and contemplative reflections on the past."<sup>6</sup> I disagree with this argument, specifically in its application to *Street Scene, Boston*. Quincy's cityscape is not a depiction of the past, but is instead a celebration of the present, of the Boston that existed at the time



Quincy painted it. While some of Quincy's paintings, including *A Windy Day, Paris* and *The Writer*, contain anachronistic elements that perhaps allude to a time past, *Street Scene, Boston* is filled with contemporary references, such as the automobiles on the street, the architecture of the buildings, and the clothing of the figures. Quincy is not only acknowledging what urban life was like in Boston during this era, but he is embracing it. As Joseph Kospoth commented in a 1930 review of Quincy's first major show, Quincy paints his hometown of Boston "with the strength and delicacy that is born of affection and understanding."<sup>7</sup>

When describing what was most important to him when painting cityscapes, Childe Hassam once remarked, "The portrait of a city... is in a way like the portrait of a person—the difficulty is to catch not only the superficial resemblance but the inner self. The spirit, that's what counts, and one should strive to portray the soul of the city with the same care as the soul of a sitter."<sup>8</sup> Edmund Quincy adopts a similar approach to painting in his *Street Scene, Boston*. While he effectively captures the out-

ward appearance of the city, these "superficial" activities and details serve as a means of revealing something more significant: the soul of the city. By presenting the "everyday" elements that gave this city its unique character, Quincy was able to effectively capture the spirit of Boston in the early twentieth century, creating a portrait of the place that he called home.

Kristin Schmehl

1. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirsch & Adler Galleries, 2000), 7-8.
2. B.J. Kospoth, "Edmond [sic] Quincy's American Paintings," *Chicago Tribune (Paris edition)*, June 1, 1930, as quoted in Ross, 14.
3. Alice Marie O'Mara Piron, "Urban Metaphor in American Art and Literature, 1910-1930" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1982), 335-337.
4. The three exhibitions were: *The Thirteenth Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings* (Washington, DC: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1932); *The Eighteenth Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings* (Washington, DC: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1943); *The Nineteenth Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings* (Washington, DC: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1945).
5. Robert Campbell, *Cityscapes of Boston: An American City through Time* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1992), 36-90.
6. Ross, 7.
7. Kospoth, as quoted in Ross, 14.
8. Ilene Susan Fort, *Childe Hassam's New York* (San Francisco: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1993), XV.

*Industrial Quarter*, n.d.

Oil on canvas, 23 1/2 x 28 1/2 in. (59.7 x 72.4 cm)

Signed: l.l.: Quincy

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 38, cat. 50.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

Suburban life is celebrated in Edmund Quincy's painting, *Industrial Quarter*. The contemporary urban landscape depicted in this painting has similar imagery to that found in his other work, *Background of Metropolitan Industry*. Both paintings suggest an "intimate viewpoint" and the immediate surroundings of everyday suburban life.<sup>1</sup> The imagery in both of these paintings suggests a juxtaposition of suburban life and industrialization with depictions of suburban buildings and quiet landscapes. Unlike the *Background of Metropolitan Industry*, the imagery in *Industrial Quarter* addresses urban life in the suburban town directly, placing the industrial buildings in the foreground and addressing them as one of the main subjects of the painting. However, in *Background of Metropolitan Industry*, the imagery of urban life is represented in the background by industrial buildings and is not the main focal point. The industrial and suburban images in *Industrial Quarter* have pictorial significance essential to Quincy's painting.

Quincy, like other American painters Edward Hopper and Charles Burchfield, illustrates a typical American scene evoking an industrial street scene. After the end of World War II, America expanded and, as Zachary Ross stated, "the fabric of urban America became increasingly de-centralized."<sup>2</sup> Lloyd Goodrich remarked about Edward Hopper that, "opposite of the general trends of modernism: instead of subjectivity, a new kind of objectivity; instead of abstraction, a purely representational art."<sup>3</sup> Hopper's representational art can be seen in his painting, *East Wind over Weehawken* (1934), where a contemporary urban life is depicted. Like Hopper's painting, the representation of urban life can also be seen in Quincy's *Industrial Quarter*. Due to the vast amount of pictorial possibilities that can be drawn upon to depict an industrial suburban scene, both Quincy and Hopper present the visual material with pictorial significance. Quincy's *Industrial Quarter* embodies essential elements found within both suburban lifestyle and within industrial urban lifestyles. These elements in Quincy's *Industrial Quarter* are industrial buildings, lampposts, telephone poles, cement sidewalks, a paved road, picket fence, maternal home, and a "human presence."

Quincy's *Industrial Quarter* is compositionally centered by an empty paved road traveling into the distance. Writing about Hopper, Margaret Iverson suggested that "uninterrupted horizontal lines make the viewer conscious of the space beyond the

limits of the scene."<sup>4</sup> The empty road traveling into the distance is a visual construct also found in Hopper's painting, *Manhattan Bridge Loop* (1928). In this image, an empty road traveling into the distance is also the center of the composition.

Both a telephone pole and a lamppost balance the industrial setting of Quincy's painting. These elements of an industrial setting compositionally add vertical balance on either side of the diagonal road. These two objects also suggest the industrial period found in the suburban street scene. The verticals in the lampposts are not entirely vertical and lean in different directions, which is another characteristic found in Hopper's painting entitled *Manhattan Bridge Loop*. As in the work by Hopper, horizontals provide the foundation for the structure and as noted by Goodrich, "are crossed and interpreted by strong verticals."<sup>5</sup> Also similar to the composition in Hopper's painting is Quincy's use of verticality which is a dominant compositional element also found in *Industrial Quarter*. The verticality is illustrated through the angular industrial buildings, the telephone pole, lamppost, and fence. The diagonal road breaking up the composition divides the suburban life depicted on the left from industrial buildings depicted on the right. The industrial buildings are dominant elements of the scene in both color palette and size.

The vibrant palette in rich colors of salmon, red, and bright yellows depicts the large industrial buildings. On the opposite side of the road, a warm, rich palette is juxtaposed by rich shades of blue, brown, and green. The juxtaposition of colors competes with one another from the respective sides of the painting. The rich shades depicted in the trees and home on the left of the diagonal road emphasize Quincy's application of paint. The loose brushstrokes in the panels and roof of the house suggest paintings by Degas, such as *Ballerine en Rose* (1890). In Degas' painting, the brushstrokes are evident in the ballerina's tutu, strokes which are similarly evident in the house found on the left-hand side of the foreground of *Industrial Quarter*. While Quincy is not an "impressionist" painter like Degas, his brushstrokes are much more vivid in the house than those of the flat application of paint found in the industrial buildings on the other side of the diagonal road. The earth tones in the diagonal road are painted using diagonal brushstrokes, creating a sense of vertical movement throughout the image. This vertical movement can also be seen in Degas' *Ballerine en Rose* in the tutu. The application of paint on the right-hand side of the composition creates a solid surface with little to virtually no movement at all.

It can be suggested that the light in this scene reveals the "character" of the buildings. Quincy's application of light shadows suggests the individual forms of buildings and their surfaces. The shadows cast from the sun create the sharp angles of the buildings as well as diagonal movement. Similar to Quincy's other work, *A Shady Street*, movement is created through light. Shadows from the sun are cast on the roads in both paintings.



The spectator is positioned high, in a birds-eye view, and gazes over the scene further enticed by the two figures walking on the sidewalk below. The presence of these male figures invites the viewer to gaze onto the quiet street. “Human presence” is also appropriate to the scene in Quincy’s *A Shady Street*. In both *A Shady Street* and *Industrial Quarter*, the spectator’s vantage point is visually compelling because it enables the viewer to become part of the scene.

An arbitrary cropping of objects can be seen in *Industrial Quarter*. While the buildings are oriented to draw the viewer in, the viewer’s perspective of the buildings in the foreground is distorted. While the buildings appear to be oriented in the proper proportions following the line of sight along the perspective of the road, the perspective is not “correct.” Distorted perspective can also be seen in the house depicted in Hopper’s painting entitled *Solitude #56* (1944). Both *Industrial Quarter* and *Solitude #56* have strong diagonal lines created by a road that breaks up the composition. In both works, the perspective of the buildings does not follow the correct perspective of the

roads, respectively. The distorted perspective is evident in the industrial building located in the lower right foreground of the painting. The spectator is positioned at an angle that physically does not allow for such a frontal view of the building. This distortion can also be seen in the suburban house located in the left foreground of the painting. The strong diagonal of the bottom part of the roof does not follow the same perspective as the road does in the center of the composition. Therefore, the perspective of the roof of the house is entirely distorted. However, the house represents suburban life.

Edmund Quincy’s *Industrial Quarter* addresses urban life in a suburban town. Suburban life is celebrated in this contemporary urban landscape.

Courtney Scally

1. Lloyd Goodrich, *Edward Hopper* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993), 103.
2. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 7.
3. Goodrich, 97.
4. Margaret Iverson, “In The Blind Field: Hopper and the Uncanny,” *Art History* 21, no. 3 (September 1998): 422.
5. Goodrich, 141.

### *Background of Metropolitan Industry*, n.d.

Oil on canvas, 32 x 39 1/2 in. (81.3 x 100.3 cm)

Signed: l.r.: Quincy

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000); *Portrait of American Exhibition* (New York: Artists for Victory, Inc., 1944).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 34, cat. 14.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

In his *Background of Metropolitan Industry*, Edmund Quincy painted a diagonal in the form of a brown fence to direct the eyes of the viewer through the painting. The viewer starts to examine the painting from the lower left corner where two parts of the fence meet. From there, the viewer's eyes follow the fence on the right, up past an old garden with trees, other vegetation, and some old trellises. At the end of the fence, the viewer's eyes are taken across a horizontal row of old, broken, and neglected wagons. When the wagons run into the frame of the painting, the viewer is forced to move his or her eyes upward and take in the distant cityscape and surrounding industry indicated by a water tower and billowing white smoke. From there, the viewer takes in the wide open sky that covers and unifies the whole scene. This technique of using an angle to force the viewer to look at imagery in the way the artist wants him or her to is something Quincy used in many of his paintings, including *Rural Landscape with Distant Church* and *Venice Canal*.

In *Background of Metropolitan Industry*, Quincy places the viewer in the role of a "spectator." This technique is common practice by Quincy, and can be seen in his other paintings, including *Street Scene, Boston*, in which the viewer looks at a street scene from an elevated position, a banishment of the viewer to an observation point outside the image rather than a point within the scene. The viewer in *Background of Metropolitan Industry* is standing off center and to the left. Quincy has placed the viewer in this location in order to control the way he or she views the scene. It seems clear that Quincy intends the viewer to follow the fence so that it is seen as a progression of time.

The first thing that the viewer sees is the garden, which is a small-scale form of agriculture. Next, the viewer sees the row of broken down wagons, objects that people have abandoned, perhaps, for something newer and more modern. Finally, there is the industrial city in the background, clearly a sign of what Quincy saw going on around him.

Another aspect of this painting is Quincy's use of framing. Quincy has a way of painting an image that looks as if it has been taken out of something larger. For instance, in *Background of Metropolitan Industry*, the scene looks like a still frame taken from a reel of film. In cinematic film, each frame comes together on the screen to form a whole scene; individually, however,

each frame is a photograph. These photographs are taken at very rapid speed so they can be combined to create a motion picture, and some frames capture unique angles, with figures and objects cut off, and interesting lighting effects. These unique details are perhaps what Quincy was trying to reproduce in his painting. A contemporary of Quincy, Edward Hopper, was said to "[carry] the main horizontal lines of the design with little interception to the edges of the picture...to enforce this idea and to make one conscious of the spaces and elements beyond the limits of the scene itself."<sup>1</sup> This idea of the picture going beyond the frame can be seen in the horizontal line of the wagons. The line is abruptly interrupted by the frame of the painting, which even cuts one of the wagons in half on the right side of the scene. Quincy would have seen Hopper's works, and also would have been aware of how motion picture film worked at the time. We know that Hopper looked at film for inspiration and, as Barbara Haskell noted, "He exploited the framing and lighting conventions of cinema...cropping his scenes off-center. As a result, his canvases often register a frozen moment in a cinematic sequence."<sup>2</sup> In *Background of Metropolitan Industry*, Quincy may have been thinking along the same lines as the image is framed off-center. Furthermore, there is no central figure, but rather a few objects that lead the viewer's eyes from one side of the painting to the other, and the viewer almost expects the scene to go on, perhaps with more wagons or more of the city. Quincy's paintings are framed in such a way that they seem like part of a bigger picture.

Framing techniques were not the only things Quincy may have looked at in Hopper's paintings. Hopper also used something called a "wedge design." He would create a space, usually a room, which would have two walls that met at a point that was usually aimed towards the viewer, though not always. This technique allows the viewer to look in through both walls, or in one wall and out the other, but still allowing the artist to frame the space and give it depth. This technique can be seen in Hopper's *Nighthawks* (1942).<sup>3</sup> In the scene, a waiter works behind the counter while three customers sit in a diner late at night. Hopper allows the viewer to look in on them through one window and then past them and out through the other window onto a dark street. The windows come to a point to create the "wedge" and in turn, the three-dimensional space of the diner area. Quincy also attempts "wedge design" with the two sides of fencing that meet at a point in the lower left corner of his painting. Quincy used fencing in the outdoors to create the wedge, so what we can see of the garden has not been altered, but depth has been created by the addition of the horizontal area of the fence.

Hilary Smith

1. Lloyd Goodrich, *Edward Hopper* (New York: Henry N. Abrams, 1993), 104.

2. Barbara Haskell, *The American Century: Art and Culture 1900-1950* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art in association with W.W. Norton and Co., 1999), 182.

3. Goodrich, 106.



### *A Mediterranean Church, n.d.*

Oil on canvas, 19 1/2 x 28 1/2 in. (49.5 x 72.4 cm)

Signed: I.r.: Quincy

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 33, cat. 2.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

Edmund Quincy portrays a cityscape of a church and town along the Mediterranean coast in his painting, *A Mediterranean Church*. During his career, Quincy traveled through Europe and along the Mediterranean coast, documenting his travels through his paintings. In these travels, Quincy was drawn, as stated by Zachary Ross, to the “urban fabric of old-world cities.”<sup>1</sup> Quincy was interested in places that had rich, local color, which is evident in his choice of palette in his European-based paintings.<sup>2</sup> Other European paintings in this exhibition that follow the same rich palette used in *A Mediterranean Church* are *Rural Landscape with Distant Church*, *Windy Day, Paris*, and *Venice Canal*.

Quincy applied a saturated palette of salmon, blues, and earth tones in *A Mediterranean Church* and demonstrated a range of light and dark. A similar use of tonality can be seen in Gustave Courbet’s (1819-1877) painting entitled *A Thicket of Deer at the Stream of Plaisir-Fontaine* (1866).<sup>3</sup> Courbet’s painting illustrates a similar tone through shadow and light as in Quincy’s painting. In both Courbet’s and Quincy’s paintings, the trees and shadows occupy the darkest darks. In Quincy’s painting, the color of the church illustrates the lightest lights. The range of tonality in most of Quincy’s works, and specifically in *A Mediterranean Church*, creates depth and perspective. There is no black in his application of paint or in outlining of objects. The depth and angles are created by the tonal difference in his palette. The vertical, diagonal, and horizontal lines create movement in a similar way to those as found in *Rooftops and Cathedral, Basel*.

The shadows created by the church, both on the façade as well as the dirt road next to the church, create line and movement. Line and movement created by sunlight and shadows are similar to American painter Edward Hopper. Hopper’s painting, entitled *Sun in an Empty Room* (1963), focuses on the effect of sunlight and shadow on forms. In a similar fashion, Quincy’s painting illustrates the movement and line created by the shadows cast by the sunlight. Quincy’s use of light in his painting can also be seen in Impressionist Claude Monet.<sup>4</sup> Monet’s studies of light are evident in his painting, *Rouen Cathedral* (1892-1894). While Monet’s image does not apply to subject or genre, the study of light is visible in both Quincy’s painting and Monet’s. The composition of the painting is balanced both by the church on the left side of the painting and the tree on the

right side. Objects in the scene are arbitrarily cut off, but the church and tree act as a frame for the composition of the painting. While these two objects stand vertically, there is a lot of diagonal movement in the shadows, carrying the spectator’s eyes from the foreground to the background.

The term “portrait of place,” coined by Henry James, can be used to describe Quincy’s treatment of this scene.<sup>5</sup> The rich colors Quincy used to depict the buildings are similar to those found along the Mediterranean coast. The sense of “portrait of place” is further illustrated by the Mediterranean-styled roofs. The church is appropriate to the scene because it is a typical landmark of a specific place that Quincy saw. The church in Quincy’s painting, however, is not traditional in depiction. While the church is large in size, Quincy approached it from an obscure angle. The angle from which the spectator views the church is not celebrating its traditional meaning, but rather its form and shape. With the church acting more as a geometric form rather than a sentimental monument, the beauty of the land becomes visible as a subject. Quincy took a similar approach in his painting entitled *The Red Church, Boston*. In this painting, Quincy depicted what appears to be a backyard of a house in a Boston neighborhood. The majority of the foreground in the painting is made up of the unkempt backyard of a house. The backyard appears to be run down and filled with a stray dog and debris. The church is visible only above the rooftops of the houses, which does not represent it in a more expected, grand form. The obscure angle of *The Red Church, Boston* is similar to the obscure angle of *A Mediterranean Church*.

While the depiction of the church is not traditional, Quincy’s painting portrays a cityscape of a church. Quincy applied a saturated palette, rich in color, to paint the Mediterranean coast he saw.

Courtney Scally

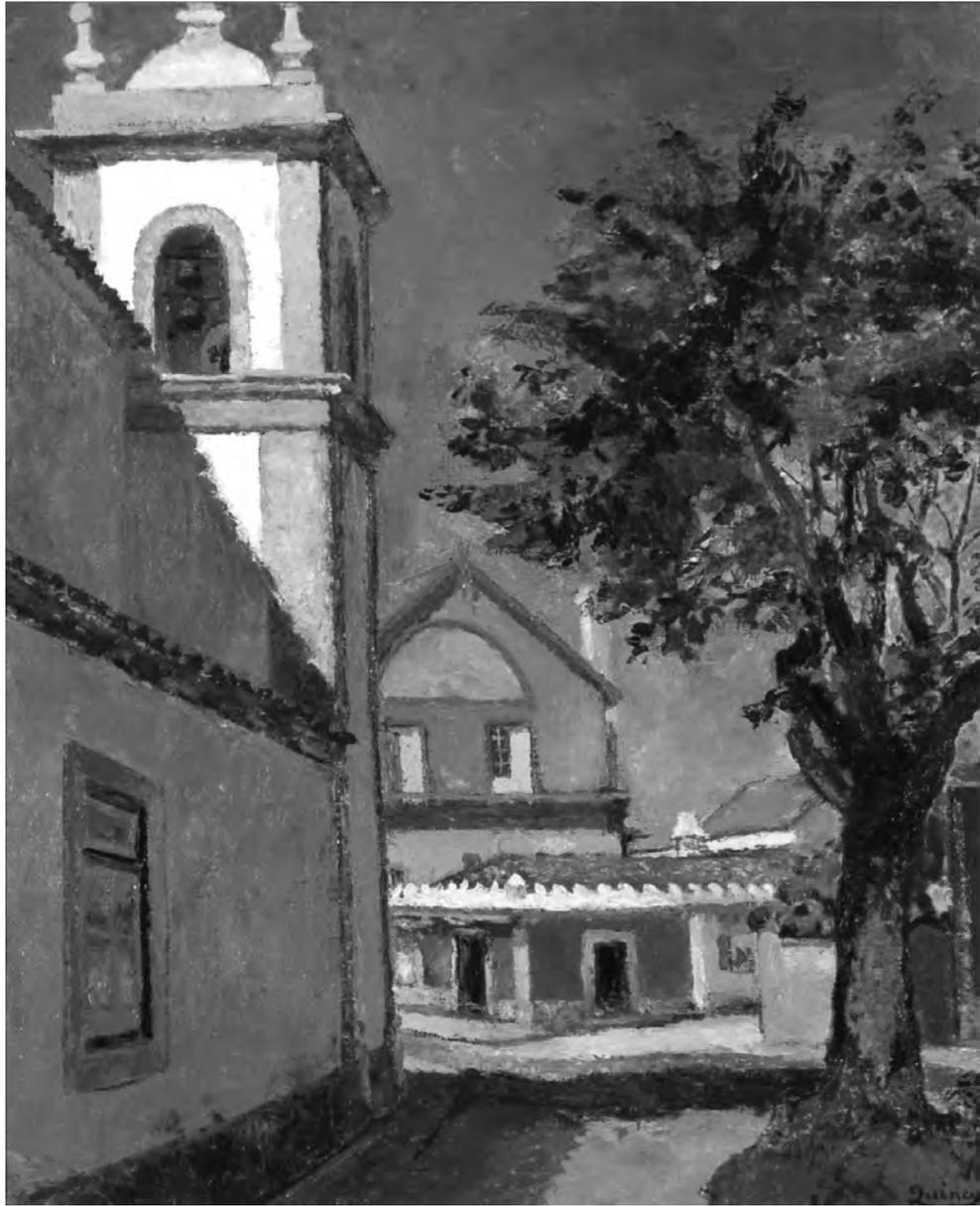
1. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 3.

2. Ross, 7.

3. Lloyd Goodrich, *Edward Hopper* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993), 122, discusses Courbet’s painting in relation to the style of Edward Hopper. Similarly, we can make the same analogy with respect to Quincy.

4. Gail Levin, *Edward Hopper: Art and the Artist* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1980), 50.

5. As cited in Ross, 29.



*Rooftops and Cathedral, Basel, n.d.*

Oil on wood, 15 1/5 x 18 1/3 in. (38.6 x 46.6 cm)

Signed: l.l.: Quincy

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000); *Exhibition of Paintings by Edmund Quincy* (Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College Art Museum, 1945).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 11, 38, cat. 42; *Exhibition of Paintings by Edmund Quincy* (Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College Art Museum, 1945), n.p.

Quincy's *Rooftops and Cathedral, Basel* stands apart from his other European paintings. Most of his paintings of European scenes show Southern Europe and, as Zachary Ross remarked, "thus tend to be more colorful than his grittier Boston paintings."<sup>1</sup> This painting is an exception. The surface is clearly "gritty," and it does not have the same clear, bright palette that Quincy used in such paintings as *A Windy Day, Paris* or *Rural Landscape with Distant Church*. This difference in palette and surface may be attributed to one of Quincy's periods studying in Paris, which began in 1927 at the Academie Colorossi.<sup>2</sup> One critic noticed the effect the texture of Quincy's paintings had upon him: "With a cosmopolitan breadth of view, he has absorbed the best of French influence."<sup>3</sup> Barbara Weinberg discussed this French influence upon American Impressionists: "As students of Paris...some of these Americans were exposed to the French Impressionists' direct, rapidly rendered, rough-textured, light-saturated portrayals of modern life."<sup>4</sup> The *Christian Science Monitor* mentioned the "warm red glow of old bricks and tiled housetops" of this painting, demonstrating the color scheme.<sup>5</sup> In *Rooftops and Cathedral, Basel*, Quincy combined his rich, warm palette (seen in Quincy's work such as the buildings of his *Industrial Quarter*) and a thick, textured surface to create a specific atmosphere in his rendering of a scene of urban rooftops and a cathedral.

Quincy incorporated the "impressionist" ideal of "rejecting conventional detail" by not depicting every shingle from the roofs, every relief on the cathedral's walls, every change in texture on the structures.<sup>6</sup> Rather, he depicted a scene focusing upon the tops of these structures, with an emphasis upon tone and color. The compositional layout looks similar to a photograph that might have been taken from a window from an upper story of an apartment building. This "photographic" approach is typical in many Impressionist paintings. Numerous Impressionist artists from Degas (in, for example, *The Rehearsal* [1873-1875]) to William Merritt Chase (in *At the Seaside* [1892]) arranged their compositions so that they did not look staged, and instead appeared to be scenes that the artist spontaneously decided to depict. Margaretta Lovell noted in her discussion of an Impressionist exhibition of cityscapes that, "while the principal buildings were generously garnished with elaborate sculptural programs, it was for the most part the overall urban

ensemble that the painters recorded and celebrated."<sup>7</sup> Daniele Devynck once said of Toulouse-Lautrec, "The color scheme is entirely defined, with reds, purples, and violets that create a grave, subtle harmony."<sup>8</sup> This is particularly obvious in Lautrec's paintings of the *Moulin Rouge* (1890), where Lautrec incorporated a vivid color palette to unify the smoky air and the late-night crawlers of the venue. Likewise, Quincy's warm palette of rich reds and lush browns unifies the rooftops with the cathedral. In this unity, Quincy has created a peaceful microcosm: he is not concerned with the noisy streets of Basel, nor the activities in the homes. Zachary Ross noted, "His pictures are often careful studies of the quiet sides of the city." Quincy's focus is solely upon the "harmony" between the rooftops and the cathedral and the visual world that these objects create.

In his depiction of this microcosm, Quincy suggests that he is portraying a moment in this world rather than a permanent image of these rooftops and this cathedral. Quincy's use of light in the painting shows that he is portraying a particular time of day, most likely sunrise or sunset, as indicated by the juxtaposition of highlighted areas on one side of the buildings and deep shadows on the other sides. Zachary Ross noticed this attention to detail when he noted Quincy's "clear portrayal of sky and sunlight."<sup>10</sup> Henri Luc Gerstein noticed a similar approach by Maximilien Luce in his portrayal of *Notre Dame Cathedral* (1899): "The effect of weather, time of day, and movement interested him more than the activities of the people on the bridges, quays, and streets."<sup>11</sup> Quincy further relays that this is a transient moment in the sky by framing the structures: clouds hover in some areas while powder blue sky pokes out in others, generating a moment of changing weather. This combination of temporal changes (be it sunrise or sunset), along with the pending transformation of weather, create an image of a particular moment. Juliet Wilson-Bureau described this concept of transience when she described Monet's *Rouen Cathedral* as having an "evocation of fleeting changes in light and atmosphere."<sup>12</sup>

Quincy's *Rooftops and Cathedral, Basel* presents this portion of Basel as a world unto itself. Maximilien Luce had a similar goal when painting *Notre Dame*. He wrote to a friend, "I'm still grinding away at *Notre Dame*. I would like to do ceremonies, marriages, people coming and going, in a word Paris."<sup>13</sup> In Quincy's painting, the viewer sees only the tops of the structures and the sky. Quincy's focus upon color in order to unify the scene along with his allusions to time and atmosphere, make for a very specific portrait of this cityscape. The viewer is immersed in the European architecture, the space of this quiet microcosm above the streets, and the air that permeates this area. Theodore Roosevelt had a comparable reaction when he visited the World's Columbian Exposition, an Impressionist collection of cityscapes. When asked what impressed him most, he easily replied, "The buildings, of course."<sup>14</sup>

Anna Alston Donnelly



1. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 13.
2. Ross, 12.
3. Undated newspaper clipping, Hirschl & Adler Galleries archives.
4. Barbara H. Weinberg, "From Impressionism to Realism, Sympathies and Surprise," *Artnews* 93 (May 1994): 67.
5. Excerpt from *Christian Science Monitor*, April 13, 1932, Hirschl & Adler Galleries archives.
6. Ulrich W. Heisinger, *Impressionism in America: The Ten American Painters* (Munich: Presetel-Verlag, 1991), 10.
7. Margaretta M. Lovell, "Picturing 'A city for a Single Summer': Paintings of the World's

- Columbian Exposition," *The Art Bulletin* 78 (March 1996): 46.
8. Daniele Devynck, "Style and Technique," in *Toulouse-Lautrec* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), 56.
9. Ross, 7.
10. Ross, 13.
11. Marc Saul Gerstein, *Impressionism: Selections from Five American Museums* (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1999), 106.
12. Juliet Wilson-Bureau, *Manet, Monet and the Gare Saint-Lazare* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 128.
13. Gerstein, 106.
14. Lovell, 6.

## *A Quiet Street Corner, Boston, n.d.*

Oil on masonite, 24 x 19 1/2 in. (60.9 x 49.5 cm)

Signed: l.r.: Quincy

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 8, cat. 22.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

*A Quiet Street Corner, Boston* is another cityscape by Edmund Quincy that depicts the artist's hometown of Boston, Massachusetts. As a result of his ancestry and his family's prominent position in this city, Quincy had a unique relationship with Boston, and his personal experiences shaped his perception of the city and influenced the way he presented it to his viewers. Quincy's images of Boston vary greatly in both their style and location as the artist sometimes portrayed the more familiar areas of the city, while at other times he focused on the city's quieter, more obscure neighborhoods. *A Quiet Street Corner, Boston* is an example of the latter category.

*A Quiet Street Corner, Boston* depicts a residential neighborhood in Boston, one that contrasts greatly with the prominent and lively regions of the city such as that illustrated in *Street Scene, Boston*. Removed from the more visible and well-known areas located in the center of Boston, this neighborhood represents the type of environment in which the artist might have grown up. From a frontal viewpoint, Quincy presents a row of houses. These houses are exclusive brownstones inhabited by elite Bostonians. Two figures, a man and a woman, walk side by side down the street that runs in front of the houses. In *A Quiet Street Corner, Boston*, Quincy used a more subdued color palette than that in some of his other Boston paintings, with dark burgundies, browns, oranges, and grays making up the image. This work appears to be a study in tonality, and the harmonious blending of the different tones, together with the soft, natural light, create a very calm, almost somber atmosphere.

In 1930, Quincy had his first one-man show at the Galerie d'Art Contemporain in Paris, in which he exhibited many paintings of Boston and its environs.<sup>1</sup> Although it is not precisely known which works were exhibited, *A Quiet Street Corner, Boston* is probably similar to many of the Boston paintings that were shown. This exhibition drew a lot of attention from the press in both America and France, which overwhelmingly praised Quincy's depiction of the quieter, more intimate areas of Boston. As the critics observed, Quincy gave "an attractive image of that country [America] not of the tumultuousness of a big city, but an aspect more intimate, more pleasant, more picturesque."<sup>2</sup> *A Quiet Street Corner, Boston* is an example of these more intimate, picturesque portrayals of America that have been attributed to Quincy. This work focuses not on the urbanization and industrialization of the city but instead presents, simply and

clearly, a small residential neighborhood in Boston, a place that for Quincy represented the tradition of a city in which his family had been involved for generations.

Edward Hopper, an American artist and contemporary of Quincy with whom Quincy has often been compared, was also known for his depictions of the quieter, more isolated regions of a city and its surroundings.<sup>3</sup> However, while Hopper's imagery is often seen to embody a psychological isolation produced by his empty spaces, Quincy seemed to portray the more obscure neighborhoods in Boston in order to highlight the beauty and value of these areas, which for him represented his childhood and the Boston that he called home. As Thomas Devine noted in a newspaper article from 1930, in Quincy's images of Boston,

The choice of subject is not the obvious beauty of Beacon Hill or the Embankment but rather in spots which many of us pass every day without a thought of their charm. We admire the Hill and the Back Bay because it is fashionable to do so; but we scorn the South End and South Boston, which are quite as lovely, because we lack the perception to appreciate them until such a painter as Quincy points them out to us.<sup>4</sup>

While outwardly *A Quiet Street Corner, Boston* may seem less celebratory than some of Quincy's other paintings of Boston, such as *Street Scene, Boston*, because of its simplicity of imagery and subdued color palette, this image is still a revealing portrayal of city life that serves as an indicator of the artist's appreciation for quieter neighborhoods like the one depicted.

In contrast to many of Quincy's cityscapes and landscapes, with their dramatic perspective and aerial viewpoint, *A Quiet Street Corner, Boston* has a direct, frontal vantage point. Childe Hassam, a slightly older contemporary who exhibited alongside Quincy in at least one major exhibition, often painted images of the city from an above perspective looking down, with sharp angles that delineated the city streets.<sup>5</sup> These images are compositionally similar to many of Quincy's paintings. However, in some of Hassam's cityscapes, such as *Little Cobbler's Shop* from 1910, the artist chose to present areas of New York from a direct, frontal viewpoint. Ilene Susan Fort, author of *Childe Hassam's New York* (1993), explains this deviation from Hassam's typical compositions, arguing that Hassam occasionally chose to portray the city from a head-on vantage point so as to equate the quieter neighborhoods of the city with small town life: "By discarding his usual treatment of New York streets on a sharp diagonal or as part of a deep vista, Hassam equated these humble neighborhoods with small towns...Hassam was rejecting the new dynamism and congestion of the city...for a simpler, quiet place."<sup>6</sup>

This same idea can be equally applied to Quincy's *A Quiet Street Corner, Boston*. In his own writings, Quincy reveals a fondness for the old neighborhoods of Boston which, for him, represented a simpler life free from the changes occurring in urban society. In the early 1960s, Quincy returned to Boston



and joined civic activists in an attempt to stop the destruction of Boston's historic neighborhoods, areas like the one depicted in *A Quiet Street Corner, Boston*.<sup>7</sup> In an Italian publication from 1962, Quincy reported the situation that was occurring in this city. He wrote, "In the old neighborhoods of Boston...they have demolished at least a dozen houses that for America had assumed the status of historical monument."<sup>8</sup> Quincy grew increasingly dissatisfied and frustrated with the state of affairs occurring in his hometown, because for him these historic neighborhoods represented not only the city's past, but also his family's past. Despite the major changes that inevitably took place in Boston, paintings such as Quincy's *A Quiet Street Corner, Boston* serve as a testament to the Boston that once

existed, presenting a glimpse into the past and revealing a unique portrait of this city.

Kristin Schmehl

1. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 13-14.
2. "L'Exposition Edmond Quincy," *Comoedia* 635 (June 7, 1930): 3, as quoted in Ross, 14.
3. Alice Marie O'Mara Piron, "Urban Metaphor in American Art and Literature, 1910-1930" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1982), 338.
4. Thomas Charles Devine, "Scion of a Family of Boston Mayors Interprets the City of His Fathers for Parisians," clipping from an unknown newspaper, September 10, 1930, artist files, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, as quoted in Ross, 17.
5. The exhibition was: *The Thirteenth Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings* (Washington, DC: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1932).
6. Ilene Susan Fort, *Childe Hassam's New York* (San Francisco: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1993), IX.
7. Ross, 28.
8. Edmund Quincy, *Una Lettera Urbana* (Foggia, Italy: Tecnostampa, 1962), 82-83, as quoted in Ross, 28.

*Foster Street, c. 1935*

Oil on canvas, 19 1/2 x 23 3/4 in. (49.5 x 60.3 cm)

Signed: I.r.: Quincy

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000); *Paintings and Drawings by Edmund Quincy* (New York: Contemporary Arts Center, 1935-1936).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 36, 38, cat. 51.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

Edmund Quincy's *Foster Street* was created at the point when Quincy was beginning to develop his artistic identity. This painting is a residential cityscape that accentuates physical architectural relationships and focuses on the artistic connection between color and light. *Foster Street* is a painting that is full of saturated color and is framed irregularly by cropped sections of homes. *Foster Street* also depicts a flat style of paint application which is very unique among Quincy's paintings and lacks his more common texture of small, noticeable brushstrokes. Quincy's ability to capture a moment allows him to represent the "essence" of his location and it gives *Foster Street* a distinct personality.

As is found in a bulletin for his show at the Contemporary Arts Center, *Foster Street* was exhibited in Quincy's very first one-man show in New York City in 1936, *Paintings and Drawings by Edmund Quincy*,<sup>1</sup> which "gave Quincy exposure to the New York Art critics necessary to advance his career."<sup>2</sup> Due to its presence in this exhibition, *Foster Street* could have been a painting that assisted in raising Quincy's work to a higher level of public and critical recognition during this pivotal period of transition. In this painting, one can also find the kind of trademarks in his style from this time period. Though *Foster Street* is uniquely different from many paintings in the present exhibition in paint application and style, it contains visual elements closely associated with *The Little Red Church* and *Industrial Quarter*, both listed as a part of the Contemporary Arts exhibition catalogue from 1936.<sup>3</sup>

Quincy's paintings often leave the viewer with a sense of the personality of a setting that he has painted. In *Foster Street*, Quincy depicts characteristic details of his location, such as the brightly-colored homes along the tiny street, the ground plane and the shadows that give the street dimension, and an extremely flat and clear blue sky. He then accentuates these unique traits for aesthetic value in the composition with a combination of interesting angles, complementary colors, and distinct textures created by light and shadow.

*Foster Street* is the only landscape in this exhibition in which Quincy does not express any movement in the sky. There is no hint of purple or pink in the hue, and Quincy used no clouds in creating the atmosphere of this setting. This lack of texture is a distinct indication of the location of *Foster Street*,

which lies directly off the Boston Harbor. This clear blue is the kind of sky that can be found right along the coast, and it allows Quincy to place the viewer in a very distinct location in Boston where quaint homes meet the ocean sky. Subtle details, such as the sky in this image, are a part of the essence of a location that elevates Quincy's subject matter above a mere locale.

Through the angles he represents, Quincy creates motion within the composition even though the main forms in the painting are flat blocks of color that form the facades of the houses. The angles and the subtle variations of the homes are a focus of interest in this composition. A row of homes on a quiet street are transformed into an active characterization of their actual physical form because they are depicted as having varying angles to their facades. These variations invoke a sense that the homes are on a ground plane that is uneven, and this imbalance creates a sense of motion.

Contrasting with the active angles of the composition, the coloring is very flat without any excitement or action noticeable in the brushwork. There are basic black outlines used as shadows on some of the homes, and roughly painted lines depict windows and their frames. The very simple brushstrokes within Quincy's *Foster Street* do not restrict the image from retaining a strong sense of space created by the shadows and the illusion of motion. This style of brushwork can be found in Edward Hopper's paintings as well. Hopper, like Quincy, is usually classified as a "Realist," but Hopper abstracts his forms through simplification of the structures within his compositions which have been described by Lloyd Goodrich to be "built largely on straight lines."<sup>4</sup> Quincy abstracted in a similar manner and used correspondingly basic lines to create a dynamic composition in *Foster Street*.

Quincy creates two major patterns in *Foster Street* through repeated forms that complement the sense of motion in the angles of the houses and creates linear motion within the image. The first form is the fence in the foreground that contains a slight variation in hue for every panel. The motion of this colorful interplay of the same simple lines in a row creates a rhythm and a motion that pushes the viewer's eye from the right to the left side of the painting. The panels are all similar, but each maintains a slightly different size, shape, and angle, which produces a sense of motion along with variations in color. The fence is a strong reflection of Hopper's compositions about which Goodrich also noted that "frequently a strong horizontal across the foreground...acts as a base for the less regular more complex forms above and beyond."<sup>5</sup>

Within the composition, Quincy frames two more subtle and delicate forms: a figure on the porch of the yellow home, and a short budding tree. This kind of imagery is representative of a springtime scene creating a sense of temporality in the painting and enhancing Quincy's depiction of a momentary reaction to his location. The figure on the porch of the yellow home combines with the shadows in the foreground to create



the sense of two “spectators.” The figure gazes out to the left, while the viewer of the painting is placed within the scene by the shadows that lie directly at the bottom of the painting. Placing this shadow in the foreground indicates that there is a structure behind the viewer and it further creates a sense that the viewer is observing from within the *Foster Street* location. This “presence” within the image was originally the painter, but it translates to the viewer as a vehicle for him or her to be placed within *Foster Street*.

This painting depicts a unique aspect of Quincy’s interplay between forms and light without brushstroke, altering the surface with a strong texture. *Foster Street* shows the beauty of a view of a common location that offers the quaint scenery of a

small neighborhood setting. This simplified and direct view of his subjects, especially in the lesser known areas of Boston that he painted, shows the world what Quincy envisioned and the optimistic view he had of elegant moments within his surroundings.

Cassie Lynott

1. *Paintings and Drawings by Edmund Quincy* exh. cat. (New York: Contemporary Arts Center, 1935), n.p., Hirschl & Adler Galleries archives.
2. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 18.
3. *Paintings and Drawings by Edmund Quincy*, n.p., Hirschl & Adler Galleries archives.
4. Lloyd Goodrich, *Edward Hopper* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993), 141.
5. Goodrich, 141.

### *The Garden Wall*, n.d.

Oil on wood panel, 19 3/4 x 24 1/8 in. (50.2 x 61.3 cm)  
 Signed in ink: c.b.: "Estate of Edmund Quincy" [estate stamp]  
 Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).  
 Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 33, cat. 5.  
 Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

Edmund Quincy captured the contrasting relationship of architecture and nature in his work entitled *The Garden Wall*. He created a relationship between the contrasting effects of the straight-lined architecture and the curving quality of nature, which is similar to the relationship represented in his work, *A Shady Street*. In contrast to *A Shady Street*, Quincy added another element to *The Garden Wall*; the ruins have elements of both manmade things and nature. This contrasting relationship is connected as the ruins include both static architecture and the earth underneath. Quincy, as an observer within the scene, captured the characteristics of the *The Garden Wall's* contrasting yet related relationship between manmade things and nature.

The building and the wall contrast with the whisking sky, trees, and earthy grass as the straight lines of the architecture enhance the curvilinear lines of nature. Claude Monet was one of the many Impressionists who also expressed the relationship between manmade things and nature.<sup>1</sup> In his work entitled *Garden of Princess* (1868), the fluidity of his swift brushstrokes of trees and sky contrasts with the surrounding city. The tree's luscious, saturated green color stands out against the severity of the surrounding architecture. The trees of Monet's painting seem to fill out the stark and empty pavement, creating color and movement within the work. Differences in the linear quality of each form between nature and architecture enhance their individuality in both Monet's and Quincy's paintings. Quincy captured this relationship in a similar way in *The Garden Wall*, as he contrasted the building with the sky and trees.

Edward Hopper can be compared to Quincy in the manner in which he created character through architecture, using sunlight to enhance certain aspects of buildings while using shadows to create darker effects in others. A good example of the way in which Hopper used this technique can be seen in his work entitled *Cape Cod Afternoon* (1936). Hopper includes the somber cast shadows on the right side of the buildings, which enhance the highlights on certain parts of the architecture.<sup>2</sup> The highlighted parts of Hopper's building, such as the corner of the side window on the white house, stand out to a viewer because they contrast directly with the darkness of the building. The contrasts between light and dark are similar to the effect Quincy created in *The Garden Wall*.

The fixed, manmade elements of *The Garden Wall* distinguish themselves from the fluidity of the nature within the

scene. Quincy's brushstrokes give the sky motion as the clouds seem to drift into the right side of the painting. Charles Burchfield, working at the same time as Quincy, used swift brushstrokes to enhance his skies with motion and fluidity. Burchfield said, "as long as the force of direction, of rhythm is attained it does not matter if the true shape is gotten,"<sup>3</sup> a statement that is also applicable to Quincy's technique. The strong yet fluidly-angled brushstrokes create direction within the clouds and the character of motion is also evident in Quincy's representation of light in the sky. The sky is dark on the viewer's left side and then becomes brighter as the viewer's eye moves to the right. The gradation of dark to light shades of color enhances the direction of the sky.

The trees and grass also show the fleeting effects of nature, which contrast with the building and wall. Quincy's light brushstrokes create the effects of wind that seems to blow through the trees as they sway in the opposite direction from the sky. This contrasting direction of animate objects gives the painting a greater dimension of motion and fluidity. The trees in Quincy's painting can be compared to Monet's trees in his painting entitled *Poplars along Epte* (1891). Monet uses swift brushworks to create an added effect of motion as the wind seems to blow through the trees. The light quality of each stroke from Monet's brush enhances the directional movement of each tree.<sup>4</sup> Curvilinear lines and swift brushwork can also be seen within the grass of *The Garden Wall*; the shadows flatten while the highlights seem to levitate the grass. A catalogue from Quincy's one-man show in the Contemporary Arts Center of New York, 1935, commented on how he handled nature in his works: "Profound integrity, independence of thought and sensitive love of nature in all her moods."<sup>5</sup>

The most interesting aspect of *The Garden Wall* is the ruin, which includes static architecture and moving nature. Stillness of architecture and the motion of nature beneath are evident in the formation of the ruins. The ruins do not have the swift suggestion of light brushstrokes that can be seen in the trees and sky, but rather they are static like the architecture. Quincy's representation of light on the ruins enhances their character, as the highlight heightens some areas of the curving earth while the indents create the somber effects of shadow on other parts.

The curvilinear lines and formations within the ruins relate the architecture to the surrounding nature. In contrast to the building and wall, straight lines are not included in the ruins; they have curvilinear lines of color like those of the grass. The sumptuous curves of the ruin and its forms relate to the curves of the surrounding nature. Quincy used different ranges of color to give the ruins the "realistic," three-dimensional effect of nature. In relation to Quincy, Hopper once wrote for the catalogue of his 1933 retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, "My aim in painting has always been the most exact transcription possible of my most intimate impressions of nature."<sup>6</sup> Similarly, this observation underscores the natural effects of



Quincy's intimate representation of how nature flows into the ruins of *The Garden Wall*. The earth has begun to envelop the ruin as if converting the architecture to nature. A quote about Monet's painting, *La Promenade d'Argenteuil* (1872), explains the natural effect of the ruins: "All the pieces of the picture fit together like the interlocking parts of an ideally constructed world."<sup>7</sup> The ruins in Quincy's painting have formed from the interlocking parts of architecture and nature. The once architectural ruins have fallen and faded into nature as the earth begins to mold into them.

One would think that nature and architecture have nothing to do with each other in form and content, yet Quincy has bridged them in *The Garden Wall*. Quincy created character

within each element of the scene. Architecture, nature, and the ruins combine to illustrate a "portrait" of a place.

Dorothy Paige Litz

1. Paul Hayes Tucker, *Claude Monet: Life and Artist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 12.
2. Lloyd Goodrich, *Edward Hopper* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993), 113.
3. John I.H. Baur, *The Inlander: Life and Work of Charles Burchfield, 1893-1967* (New York: Cornwall Books, 1982), 118.
4. Tucker, 21.
5. *Paintings and Drawings by Edmund Quincy* exh. cat. (New York: Contemporary Arts Center, 1935), n.p., as quoted in Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 19.
6. Virginia M. Mecklenburg, *Modern American Realism: The Sara Roby Foundation Collection* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press for the National Museum of American Art, 1987), n.p.
7. Tucker, 21.

*Rural Landscape with Distant Church, n.d.*

Oil on canvas, 19 3/4 x 24 in. (50.2 x 61 cm)

Signed: l.r.: Quincy; c.b.: Estate of Edmund Quincy [estate stamp]

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 33, cat. 4.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

*Rural Landscape with Distant Church* is just one of a number of landscapes Edmund Quincy painted throughout his career.

Upon first look, the viewer immediately notices the dirt path that cuts through the painting at a slight diagonal. The path draws the viewer's eyes from the foreground of soft green grass and a solitary tree, through the middle ground of crops that are most likely corn, and brings the viewer's eyes to rest on the distant church that is indicated in the title. At the end of the path, the viewer's eyes naturally move up to the large, light sky. This agrarian scene was most likely inspired by rural America, as corn is a common American crop. Quincy's use of diagonals, clear portrayal of the sky, and gentle treatment of the landscape through a color palette of soft blues, greens, browns, violets, and sensuous lines all suggest his strong background in academic painting.<sup>1</sup>

Quincy has placed the viewer in this painting slightly to the left of the path, and this position puts the viewer in a position to observe the path, rather than be on it. The path suggests movement or travel, but one could argue that Quincy does not want us as viewers "going into" the scene further. We are supposed to look at only the specific scene that Quincy has chosen for us and take in what it means; we are "spectators" of Quincy's vision. This act of making the viewer a "spectator" is something that is also seen in the paintings of Edward Hopper, a contemporary of Quincy. In his book on Hopper, Lloyd Goodrich observed that, "Even when no window is physically present, the impression is sometimes conveyed of a remote observer...."<sup>2</sup> This effect can be seen in Hopper's painting, *Pamet River Road* (1934).<sup>3</sup> In this painting, a scene of a dirt road cutting through a residential area is very similar to the effect in Quincy's *Rural Landscape with Distant Church*. In Hopper's painting, as well, the viewer is set slightly off the road and is put into the role of a "spectator." In both paintings, the viewer is being guided to see something specific. In *Rural Landscape with Distant Church*, one could suggest that Quincy was capturing the simplicity of an agrarian society, something that had been lost in the fast moving, industrial age of the early twentieth century. This idea is supported by the presence of a church which can be read as a sign of tradition and stability.<sup>4</sup>

Quincy's manner of painting and his color choices are other issues that should be discussed in regard to this painting. Quincy could be characterized as a "representational" painter:

Quincy's trees "look" like trees, and his shadows "look" like shadows. His work, however, is not confined to one type of painting, but rather his style, particularly in this painting, contains elements of the "impressionist ideal." In this case, the "impressionist ideal" can be seen as a painting that represents elements of temporality and displays techniques that express opposing colors to represent light and darkness, rather than rendering them with grays and blacks. In this painting, Quincy used quick and short brushstrokes. This technique was used by Impressionists like Monet and Renoir to illustrate the temporality of their subjects and to reinforce the idea of a "captured" moment in time.<sup>5</sup> Quincy used a variety of brushstrokes in his paintings, so his choice of an "impressionist" method in this painting was quite purposeful. By using a technique that had been previously used to capture a moment, Quincy could be making a point about the temporality of his own image.

Furthermore, Quincy's choice of a soft color palette of blues, greens, browns, and violets is similar to that of Impressionist painters like Monet. Impressionists also incorporated many more warm colors like orange and pink, but the pastel quality of the colors in Quincy's palette and the extensive use of violet make his paintings look similar, particularly to Monet's *Row of Poplars* (1891) and *Morning on the Seine near Giverny* (1896-1897).<sup>6</sup> The Impressionists often used violet generously in their paintings. In pale shades, it could be used as a highlight and in darker shades, as a shadow. This technique of using violet instead of black, white, and gray gave the imagery in Impressionist paintings a more natural appearance; when an actual shadow is cast it is not black, but rather an altered color of the surface it is cast upon, and the same goes for a highlight or reflection. Violet is a more delicate color than black or white as well, and it complements a palette with more pastel colors like green and blue than more vibrant colors like red. Quincy used this same technique in this landscape with violet. He applied violet in the sky as a highlight and in the grass and trees as a shadow, giving his painting a similar appearance to that of an Impressionist painting. Quincy embraced the "impressionist ideal" in this painting, as he did in others such as *Background of Metropolitan Industry*, *Venice Canal*, and *The Garden Wall*.

Hilary Smith

1. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 12-13.

2. Lloyd Goodrich, *Edward Hopper* (New York: Henry N. Abrams, 1993), 105.

3. Goodrich, 226.

4. Ross, 21.

5. Lionello Venturi, "The Aesthetic Idea of Impressionism," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 1 (1941): 34-36.

6. Paul Hays Tucker, *Claude Monet: Life and Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 146.



*A Windy Day, Paris, n.d.*

Oil on canvas, 21 x 27 1/5 in. (53.3 x 69.1 cm)

Signed: l.r.: Quincy; c.b.: Greendale LI Anco, Inc.

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 23, 37, cat. 23.

Quincy's *A Windy Day, Paris* is set apart from his other works in the exhibition by its flat, poster-like appearance. A woman walks along a boutique-filled street shielding herself from the wind and her movements are lyrical and rhythmic. Toulouse-Lautrec's lithographs of the *Moulin Rouge* (1891) immediately come to mind. Lautrec "silhouetted" his figures with a visible outline and, as Daniele Devnyck remarked, "with color applied in flat, clear bright areas."<sup>1</sup> Lautrec also incorporated numerous diagonal lines across the picture plane, keeping the viewer's eye moving.<sup>2</sup> Quincy utilized similar techniques of flat color application and the incorporation of diagonal lines to allow for movement. One critic said of Quincy, "His drawing is clear, and his forms simply defined."<sup>3</sup> Despite the two-dimensional quality of the image, however, the strong diagonal in the painting adds to the movement and action of the woman, just as the lines did in Lautrec's paintings and lithographs.<sup>4</sup> These techniques of the flat appearance of the picture, strong diagonals, and clear rendering of images combine to transport the viewer to Paris, where he or she watches this woman walk down the street.

Quincy's use of viewpoint and color scheme help to establish an obvious human presence in the painting, be it the viewer or the artist himself. The viewer feels close to the woman because of the eye-level viewpoint as well as the harmonious atmosphere created by Quincy's specific palette. Both the viewpoint and the "atmosphere" share similar traits with Childe Hassam's cityscapes, such as his *Charles River and Beacon Hill* (1892). In Hassam's painting, the entire background of the landscape is painted in varying shades of violet and blue. Ulrich Heisinger noted that, "He [Hassam] was unapologetic about his Impressionist viewpoint and palette, and, if those belonging to what he termed the 'molasses and bitumen school' thought his canvases were too blue, he answered that he liked 'air that is breathable.'"<sup>5</sup> In Quincy's *A Windy Day, Paris*, an assortment of blues and purples dominate the palette in the painting, from the woodwork on the stores to the shadows of the woman's dress. One critic summarized Quincy's use of color: "He uses color to heighten the atmospheric and decorative quality."<sup>6</sup> The blues and purples work together to create a believable atmosphere. The harmony created by the colors creates a sense of real place in the subject matter. The colors allow the viewer to "see" the air to the point where it appears "breathable," or believable, just as Hassam mentioned.

The eye-level viewpoint also contributes to the idea of

"human presence" in the painting, as though there is someone, be it the artist or the viewer, watching the scene. One critic in *Art Digest* suggested of Quincy's paintings, "They may have been painted on the spot."<sup>7</sup> This indication of the presence of the artist or viewer was also an aspect of Childe Hassam's cityscapes, and may be the case in his *Charles River and Beacon Hill*. Heisinger noted a procedure Hassam used: "To capture street level scenes he often painted from a hansom cab, looking out the window and using the small seat in front of him as an easel for his panel or canvas."<sup>8</sup> In *Charles River and Beacon Hill*, it appears that the artist painted this scene of a little boy looking at the river directly from the middle of the street, and the dramatic use of perspective indicates that the artist was approaching him, as opposed to remaining stagnant. The image of the artist painting from a horse-drawn carriage, if not literal, is appropriate in a figural sense in Quincy's *A Windy Day, Paris*. Not only does it appear that Quincy, too, is on the street (as previously mentioned), but also that the woman's dress indicates a turn-of-the-century timeframe (when Hassam painted, a time in which hansom cabs were more common) rather than that of Quincy's life. Whether or not Quincy painted from a carriage, the vantage point of the viewer immediately establishes him or her just outside the picture plane. Such a viewpoint, combined with the "breathable atmosphere" (or believable portrayal of subject matter), immediately helps to establish the presence of the viewer as well as the artist: we are watching her.

One critic said of Quincy, "It is a soft-spoken enthusiasm for the small things that become significant for the moment because the artist has taken the trouble to shed dignity upon them."<sup>9</sup> Just as Quincy allows the viewer to be transported to the street, he also ensures that what we are watching is not an anonymous scene: it is a specific moment in time.

As already mentioned, the diagonal line of the sidewalk establishes movement. Also, the wind is an obvious indicator that not only is it a specific moment, but also that specific weather is causing this moment. The woman's skirt is being blown behind her as she strains to keep her hat on. Light flickers off the glass of the store-front windows as if the air is moving rapidly. Although there is no epic action in this painting, Quincy's suggestion of the instant leaves an imprint in the viewer's mind: we are experiencing this moment along with the woman in the picture.

Edward Hopper conveyed similar notions of importance in seemingly "lackluster" situations that make a painting of an everyday situation appear profound. Anna Landi said of Hopper's work, "You feel the figure has been caught in a moment of self-awareness: I'm sitting in this ratty bed, or I'm waiting for someone in this restaurant. It's not the dramatic peaks of life, but it's the little moments that everyone's life is made of."<sup>10</sup> Quincy's portrayal of a "little moment" seems to carry the same essence. The scene appears to be an everyday occurrence: a woman getting caught in the wind. However, the



very specific portrayal of this scene makes this “little moment” profound. Lindsay Pollock attempted to explain what drew viewers to Hopper’s work when she said, “Hopper is the most important photographer [with]...his use of storytelling with unresolved narratives.”<sup>11</sup> Quincy, too, draws the viewer in with a snapshot-like image of an unextraordinary moment that is made extraordinary through his artistic vision.

In *A Windy Day, Paris*, Quincy used a specific color scheme, viewpoint, and linear sensibility in order to transport the viewer to Paris, and to experience the situation in this moment. We are immersed in this portrait of a specific street as a specific woman struggles to keep her hat on. This “impressionist” notion of the viewer being involved with the work is explained by Meyer Schapiro: “One had a ‘sensation’ of place, a person, a work of art, a whole milieu, even of a life situation, as a unique nonverbal quality, a distinctive essence that seems to pervade the complex whole and could be sensed in an immediate intuition.”<sup>12</sup> Quincy’s *A Windy Day, Paris* does just that; we are immediately aware that this is no mundane windy day.

Anna Alston Donnelly

1. Daniele Devynck, “Style and Technique,” in *Toulouse-Lautrec* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), 55.
2. Douglas Cooper, *Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec: Great Art of the Ages* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, n.d.), 24.
3. “‘Quai de Plaisance, Monte Carlo’: A Painting by Edmund Quincy,” *Christian Science Quarterly* (n.d.): n.p., Hirschl & Adler Galleries archives, as cited in Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 22.
4. Ross, 13.
5. Ulrich W. Heisinger, *Impressionism in America: The Ten American Painters* (Munich: Presetel-Verlag, 1991), 101.
6. “‘Quai de Plaisance, Monte Carlo’: A Painting by Edmund Quincy,” n.p.
7. Maude Riley, “Nostalgia for France,” *Art Digest* XIX, no. 16 (May 15, 1945): 10, as cited in Ross, 22.
8. Heisinger, 101.
9. Undated newspaper clipping, Hirschl & Adler Galleries archives.
10. Anna Landi, “Who Hails from Hopper?” *Artnews* 97, no. 4 (April 1998): 167.
11. Lindsay Pollock, “Why Hopper is So Hot,” *Artnews* 103, no. 9 (October 2004): 156.
12. Meyer Shapiro, *Impressionism: Reflections and Perceptions* (New York: George Braziller, 1997), 24.



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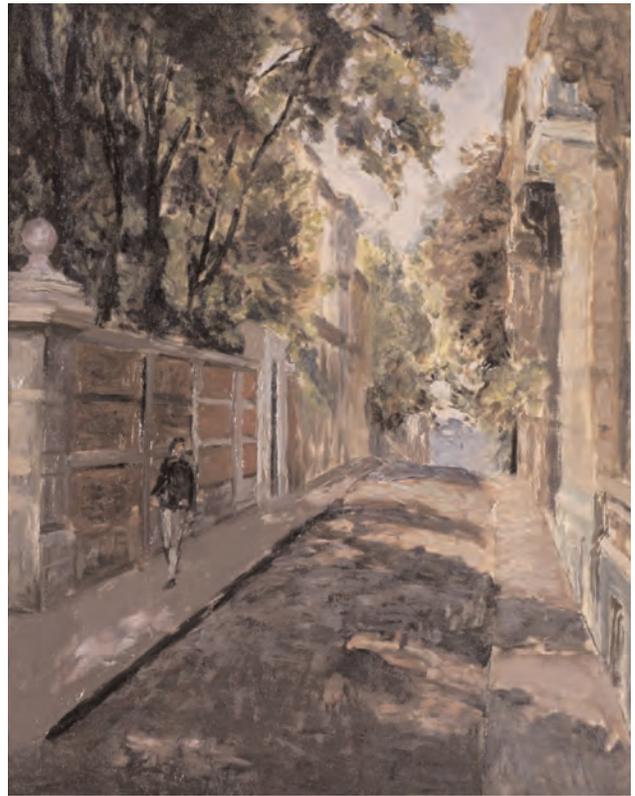
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*The Writer, n.d.*

Oil on canvas, 20 x 15 1/4 in. (50.8 x 38.7 cm)

Signed: l.r.: Quincy

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 33, cat. 10.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

In the painting, *The Writer* by Edmund Quincy, the viewer's eyes are immediately pulled into the image by a solid line providing a diagonal entry into the painting. The line is a thick, dark, brown diagonal bar that begins in the lower right-hand corner of the painting and takes the viewer to the middle of the composition where it ends. The weight and massive presence of the bar are interrupted by two white sheets of paper placed upon it. One sheet of paper sits in the foreground and seems to be parallel to the edges of the bar. The other sheet of paper disrupts the brown and attracts the viewer's eyes to a figure of a woman seated at the bar. The light blue color of the woman's blouse immediately draws attention to her because the color stands out against the dark elements like the bar and green wall behind her. One of the figure's arms stretches out onto the bar while the other arm draws the viewer's attention upward to where her hand is casually placed covering the side of her face. The bottom of her hand and fingers follow the same line as the diagonal entry of the bar. The light color of the woman's shirt and her placement in the center of the composition allow her to become the immediate focus in the painting.

The colors in the painting draw the attention of the viewer to the woman and the room in the rear of the restaurant. The restaurant itself is mainly depicted in dark tones. The wall behind the figure and bar that intersects her body surrounds her with dark elements, drawing attention to the light tone of her blouse. The figure's blouse and the white wall in the far background provide a wide range of tonality with the dark wood and her navy skirt. Light tones next to dark tones allow the light tones to stand out in the painting. Lack of a strong light source contributes to the small range of color. Although there is an absence of a wide color palette, the relationship between the tones creates a strong contrast. The dim ambience of the bar provides a glimpse of the atmosphere for the viewer.

The viewer looks directly onto the figure seated at the bar at eye-level. The bar, however, sits between them, separating the two and restricting interaction. The viewer becomes part of the woman's space and is placed in an atmosphere with her, but is not invited to see her face. The space between the viewer and figure is close enough to be comfortable and allow them perhaps to interact, but the viewer is also shut off from seeing her identity and therefore, the viewer is invited in, but is not fully embraced as a spectator. Since the woman is depicted covering

her face, there is a visual tension in the scene between the viewer and subject. The viewer is pulled into the figure's space but with the figure shielding her face, the viewer questions the presence of a spectator as part of the scene.

Behind the figure is a poster on the wall by Toulouse-Lautrec. This poster is entitled *Moulin Rouge-La Goulue*, originally made in 1891. This image was found posted all over France during the 1890s to 1900s to advertise the Moulin Rouge.<sup>1</sup> The visual entry into *The Writer* is similar to Toulouse-Lautrec's spatial constructs in this poster. As Gotz Adriani observed, "Lautrec achieved an impression of immediacy and movement by means of an off-center composition, which gives the effect of a random view."<sup>2</sup> Quincy achieved a "random view" by choosing a specific section of the bar and cutting it off at a diagonal angle, allowing another area of the restaurant to be seen. Similar to Lautrec's poster, the scene is chopped off by two objects that frame the composition at what seems to be a random, off-center view. Adriani wrote that Lautrec's "scene is cut off by the edge of the picture without regard for the composition as a whole or for meaningful connections between the figures, so that some of the truncated elements at the margin of the picture loom larger than the centre of the image."<sup>3</sup> Lautrec's technique is also visible in the random glimpse of two figures incorporated in the background of *The Writer* that draw attention to themselves and to the absence of interaction between them and the woman at the bar. Lautrec and Quincy also both show techniques in their work similar to those of the Impressionist painter, Edgar Degas. For example, Degas frequently showed "decentralizing methods of composition, with bold foreshortenings, and his organization of space around steep diagonals,"<sup>4</sup> as seen in his painting *L'Absinthe* (1876).<sup>5</sup> The technique of foreshortening is apparent in the bar and the arrangement of space around a diagonal is visible in *The Writer*. The strong diagonal line of the bar pulls the viewer toward the figure. Quincy's use of techniques similar to Degas and Toulouse-Lautrec suggests that he might have studied their works.

*The Writer* is both a portrait of a figure as well as of a place. The Lautrec poster, dark green walls, and large brown bar contribute to the environment of the restaurant and a specific moment in time. However, Quincy incorporates a Toulouse-Lautrec poster made before he was born. Quincy also depicts the woman at the bar using a quill pen. Quill pens were not still common and were probably out of style during the time in which Quincy painted *The Writer*. The inclusion of the poster and quill pen, along with the hat shelf in the rear could suggest that Quincy was painting something he never saw. Zachary Ross described Quincy as "an optimistic young man, full of nostalgia or the simpler life of times past."<sup>6</sup> Quincy may be returning to a time period before he was born and incorporating elements from that time. Quincy captures the temporality of a moment in time that he might have never actually seen.

Rebecca Magrane



1. Edward Lucie-Smith, *Toulouse-Lautrec* (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1983), 9.
2. Gotz Adriani, *Toulouse-Lautrec* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 124.
3. Adriani, 124.
4. Adriani, 124.
5. Melissa McQuillan, *Impressionist Portraits* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1986), 20.
6. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 29.

*Venice Canal, c. 1942*

Oil on canvas, 23 1/4 x 19 1/4 in. (59.1 x 48.9 cm)

Signed: l.l.: Quincy

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000); *Exhibition of Paintings by Edmund Quincy* (Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College Art Museum, 1945).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 26, 38, cat. 53; *Exhibition of Paintings by Edmund Quincy* exh. cat. (Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College Art Museum, 1945), cat. 16.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

Edmund Quincy spent a number of years in Italy throughout his career. He first spent time there early on in his career during the 1920s when he was starting out as an artist and later returned to Italy in the middle of his career during the 1940s, going back once again in the 1960s.<sup>1</sup> During his time in Italy, he produced a handful of paintings from several different locations, however, he did not exhibit any of his works from Italy until his exhibition at the Everson Museum exhibition in the early 1940s and Wellesley College in 1945.<sup>2</sup>

In Quincy's composition of *Venice Canal*, he shows a small side street in Venice. Quincy represents a canal receding into the background with empty gondolas in front of buildings that lead down the street on a diagonal as a few pedestrians stroll by. In *Venice Canal*, Quincy demonstrated a keen sensitivity to the environment in the way he rendered each part of his composition in order to give an "accurate" impression of the city. Thus, it was not unusual for Quincy to select his palette based on his location. The colors he painted with are based in an attempt to capture what he sees. Quincy's color choice can be illustrated through the similarly saturated colors he used in his paintings done near the Mediterranean, for example, *A Mediterranean Church* and *Quai de Plaisance, Monte Carlo*.<sup>3</sup> Quincy painted with striking colors in his paintings produced in the same region, which reveals how Quincy viewed his subjects in these areas.

Another quality of Quincy's awareness of the setting in *Venice Canal* can be seen through his consistent use of tonal variations of just a few colors and strong contrasts. For instance, Quincy captured the rich quality of light falling across the buildings. The light is bright but soft, suggesting that it is probably afternoon. By paying such close attention to his palette, Quincy carefully described the nature of northern Italian light in every part of the painting.

Quincy's depiction is exactly what a modern-day audience thinks of when it hears "Venice" and it allows the city to be identified even if one has never been there before. To the broad American public during the time Quincy painted this image, most illustrations of Italy were negatively influenced by politics and propaganda. Italy and America were more politically driven as the United States was on the brink of entering World War II, and Italy was already well engaged in it. Quincy, who was overtly

against the war, found fascist Italy too oppressive and so he left shortly after he married Josephine Biamonti in 1940.<sup>4</sup>

Quincy did a great deal of traveling back and forth to Europe throughout his career which allowed him to draw on a number of different experiences while creating his paintings. He spent a significant amount of time studying in Paris in the 1920s after being urged to by his mentor and fellow Bostonian painter, George Loftus Noyes.<sup>5</sup> It is evident that his travels to France affected Quincy's style in terms of color choice, brushstrokes, and the temporality of a composition. These stylistic qualities were characteristic of the Impressionists who were popular in France during the later part of the nineteenth century preceding his career. Quincy used similar techniques to those of Monet, which are evident in loose brushstrokes Quincy painted with in his rendering of the sky, buildings, and water in *Venice Canal*. He also painted with high contrasting colors which was a technique that Monet often used in his paintings.<sup>6</sup> Quincy's depiction of the water loosely reflects other areas in *Venice Canal* such as the boats, buildings, and sky. Quincy selected violet undertones for many of the colors in the painting, which was a trend for French Impressionists and for Monet.<sup>7</sup> Quincy was able to combine examples and techniques from his travels to create "character" in his paintings.

Quincy's use of diagonals is a critical element in the composition of his images. In *Venice Canal*, he painted the diagonal of the canal to lead the viewer into the scene from the bottom of the painting. In addition, he utilized the diagonal lines in the architecture of the buildings to lead the viewer around the work. Quincy created a dynamic spatial relationship. He chose distinguishable architecture in the vanishing point of the work, perhaps to draw attention to the specific location of the cityscape.

He chose a dynamic viewpoint which he connected with the setting. The scene was painted from some distance, which is clear from his relation to the figures and the buildings. He particularly excelled in his landscapes and cityscapes, so it is not surprising that he chose to focus more on the buildings and the setting than the figures in it; perhaps this is why he preferred to stay at a slight distance from them. He framed the work as though he was painting from a footbridge over the canal. The viewpoint suggests that Quincy was an observer, looking in as he kept a certain amount of distance between himself and the figures he painted. This distance gives the painting a quality of a passing moment through the voyeuristic quality of "spectatorship" as the figures pass by. The painting exhibits the plein-air quality of Quincy's style as he captured a quick instant as figures walk by the canal. The mood of the scene appears tranquil and relaxed.

Quincy captured the essential eminence of Venice and created a sensitive and vivid portrayal of the city.

Susannah Haworth



1. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 12, 21, 26, 28.
2. Exhibition pamphlets from Everson Museum, c. 1942, and Wellesley College Art Museum, 1945, Hirschl & Adler Galleries archives.
3. Ross, 20, 33, 34.
4. Ross, 21.
5. Ross, 11.
6. Paul Hayes Tucker, *Claude Monet: Life and Artist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 4.
7. Tucker, 5.

*Portrait of a Young Girl, n.d.*

Oil on wood panel, 18 x 13 3/4 in. (45.7 x 34.9 cm)

Signed: I.r.: Quincy

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 38, cat. 41.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

In his *Portrait of a Young Girl*, Edmund Quincy effectively depicted the mood of his sitter. Carefully rendering the girl's down-turned mouth and sad eyes, Quincy conveys a juvenile melancholy with a clarity and an attention to detail that makes his depiction quite believable. He has represented a young girl in her fancy dress with her hair neatly braided and tied with ribbons. Her apparent demeanor hints at the idea that she would rather be playing than sitting for a portrait. She holds a small bird, either a toy or favorite pet which, one might conjecture, she may have been allowed as a sort of pacifier to sooth her boredom. Quincy, like all portraitists, would likely have done various preparatory drawings for the painting.<sup>1</sup> One can only imagine the girl's impatience as she tried to remain still in her heavy coat as the artist did studies, and the burst of energy with which she surely abandoned the stately, rigid armchair, discarding her wool coat and beret as she left to do more exciting things.

The subtlety with which Quincy depicts the girl's passing mood is reminiscent of Thomas Eakins' formal, but still naturalistic, portraits such as *Portrait of Alice Kurtz* (1903) and *Portrait of Amelia C. Van Buren* (c. 1891). Quincy would likely have been acquainted with the work of Thomas Eakins, a painter in Philadelphia at the turn of the century who greatly influenced the evolution of American realism as well as the academic painting style taught in art academies for at least the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> Eakins was known for the extreme realism of his paintings, especially his portraits, in which he attempted to depict not only the particular details of his subjects' appearance, but also their essential character.<sup>3</sup>

In his own portrait, Quincy chose a light, neutral background, similar to that in Eakins' painting of Ms. Kurtz, in order to focus attention on the sitter's aspect, rather than on her surroundings. Quincy painted with a muted palette like that of Eakins to portray the girl subtly and naturalistically, not glamorously. Quincy also created the Eakins-like effect of diffused, indoor natural light falling upon his subject, illuminating the nuances in her expression and the details of her face. As in Eakins' portrait of Ms. Van Buren, Quincy posed his sitter in a chair close to him so that her legs extend beyond the space contained within the canvas. He also, similarly, depicted his subject with a single prop: in this case, a bird rather than the fan that Ms. Van Buren holds. Quincy, like Eakins, worked towards a

high level of naturalism and intimacy in the rendering of his subject and the composition of his painting. In *Portrait of a Young Girl*, Quincy achieved the psychological and emotional depth of depiction that Eakins was known for, capturing the subtleties of his sitter's personality.<sup>4</sup>

To best capture the particular personality of this young girl, Quincy likely spent several hours studying her closely to get to know her temperament and her individual expressions. He may have even known her well already. Perhaps she was the daughter of a friend or she may have been related to Quincy himself. Regardless, there seems to be a closeness between painter and sitter in this portrait, which is reflected both in the believability of the girl's appearance, and in the visual space of the painting. In the portrait, Quincy reveals his proximity to the girl as he was painting her, a distance of only a few feet. Just as in Thomas Eakins' *Portrait of Amelia C. Van Buren*, the sitter's body extends beyond the edge of the painting, symbolically entering the "real" space of the viewer. Because the girl is not confined to the space of the portrait, the viewer has access to her and can seemingly enter the painting, and vice versa. The viewer takes the visual perspective and position of the artist who, as the original observer and "documenter" of the scene, is implicitly present in the work. The girl thus becomes more physically present, more "real," while the viewer/artist becomes a part of the painting.

The naturalism of the young girl created by Quincy's attentive depiction of her reflects the fact that this was a real person. This is a "true" portrait, not a rhetorical one. The child is not meant to be seen as an allegory for youth or beauty, but as a real person represented at a certain moment in her life. It is unfortunate that such an intimate and specific depiction should be entitled *Portrait of a Young Girl*; clearly the actual identity of the girl has been lost. There are titles of Quincy's other portraits listed in old exhibition catalogues, featuring names like "Betsey" and "Sophie."<sup>5</sup> There is, however, no strong evidence that any of these could have been this young girl. It seems ironic that this girl's identity should be lost since the purpose of a portrait is to record the appearance and, essentially, the identity of an individual so that there can be some sort of "physical" evidence of who that person was. Children's portraiture is even more rooted in the temporality of human life, since it preserves the appearance of a child, who, of course, will grow up quickly. Quincy's portrait was meant to capture a single, fleeting stage in this girl's life. Just as Quincy was surely trying his best to keep this young girl from running off to play, the painting itself is an attempt at capturing the essence of that girl at a fleeting moment in time.

Laura Hahn



1. Jim Aplin, "Groundwork, Dignity, and Children's Portraits," *American Artist* 69 (May 2005): 41.
2. Edward Lucie-Smith, *American Realism* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994), 33.
3. Darrel Sewell, ed., *Thomas Eakins* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art in association with New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 259.
4. Lucie-Smith, 33.
5. *Paintings by Edmund Quincy* exh. cat. (Newport, RI: The Art Association of Newport, 1943), n.p., and *Edmund Quincy* exh. cat. (New York: Contemporary Arts Center, 1942), n.p., Hirschl & Adler Galleries archives.

*A Shady Street*, n.d.

Oil on wood panel, 18 1/2 x 14 7/8 in. (47 x 37.8 cm)

Signed in ink: c.b.: "Estate of Edmund Quincy" [estate stamp]

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 38, cat. 55.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

Quincy has created a "portrait" of the relationship between manmade things and nature in his work entitled *A Shady Street*. Edward Hopper is often compared to Quincy in many elements of design and technique. The scene of *A Shady Street*, like many of Edward Hopper's paintings, captures the swift nature of the trees and sky versus the straight lines of the buildings.<sup>1</sup> Viewers are able to identify the character of the street by analyzing Quincy's point of view.

Edward Hopper's use of light and the contrasting relationship between architecture and nature are characteristics that are also evident in Quincy's works. *Cape Cod Morning* (1950) is an example of how Hopper portrays the relationship of the swiftness of nature versus the static quality of architecture. The painting is divided into two parts; a stationary house is situated on the viewer's left, which contrasts with the fluidity of trees on the viewer's right. Hopper represents movement in the trees using light, airy brushstrokes, and solid more bold brushstrokes for manmade structures. Straight lines of architecture counteract the fluid motion of the trees, which are also characteristics within Quincy's *A Shady Street*. In *A Shady Street*, the buildings and wall are inert as they counteract the motion of the overhanging trees and the background of sky. Quincy captures the contrasting association of nature and manmade things by creating a "portrait" of their relationship.

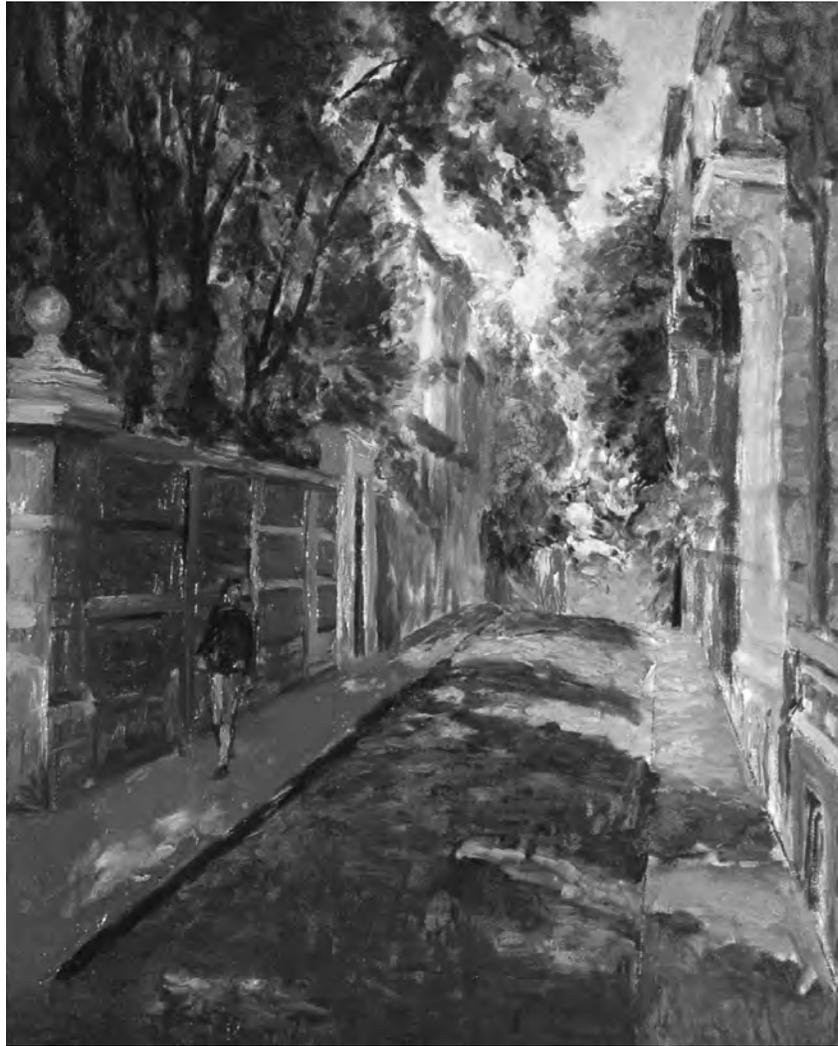
Quincy not only used the manmade elements for structure, he also used them to add character to *A Shady Street*. The elements of light enhance the character of the architecture and the street. Manmade objects such as the traditional white building on the viewer's right, and certain areas of the street stand out because they are highlighted. The highlights stand out against the somber effects of the shadows, effects which enhance Quincy's design. Edward Hopper also used light to enhance the character of a scene, and received recognition in the 1920s for his architectural paintings in which light characterized his subjects.<sup>2</sup> Hopper demonstrates this technique in his work entitled *Early Sunday Morning* (1930), where he used light as an element of design against a building. Light creates irregular shapes which heighten some areas of the building, while others are hidden in shadows. The abstract shapes of highlight portray character on the otherwise flat building, and the manmade elements are both purposeful in design and structure.

The manmade elements within *A Shady Street* have a con-

trasting relationship with the natural surroundings. Nature is not static and rigid like the architecture and the street; it has the opposite effect. Nature is swift, such as can be seen in the trees blowing in the wind or the clouds floating in the sky. Charles Burchfield, an American artist working during the 1930s, used similar techniques to those of Quincy in portraying motion in nature. Burchfield's work entitled *Black Iron* (1935) is an example of how he captured the fleeting effects of nature. The brushwork of the clouds in the distance creates a rhythm of motion as they seem to descend upon the machinery below. Burchfield commented on the effects of nature when he said, "Allow your mind to grow by letting it follow the whimsy of the moment."<sup>3</sup> Quincy, like Burchfield, also captured the swift motion of nature in his painting.

In comparison to Burchfield, Quincy used a similar technique of portraying motion in *A Shady Street*. The trees are full of color and saturation, which enhance their prominence within the scene, thus providing greater contrasts with the static buildings. Quincy filled the background with the motion of the sky and intensity of light. The highlighted edges conflict with the shadowed sections of the trees and in turn, they enhance each other. Claude Monet can be compared to Quincy in his effects of light to create movement in trees.<sup>4</sup> Monet used highlights and swift brushstrokes to create activity in trees as they dangle over the road in his painting entitled *Garden at Giverny* (1902). Each tree seems to be placed purposefully along the path to create a pattern of shadows on the street. A pattern is formed in a similar way in Quincy's painting as shifting clouds and rays of sun shine brightly onto the static quality of *A Shady Street*, creating abstract forms of shadow. Light and shadow have a contrasting relationship like that of nature and manmade things; they enhance each other because of their differences.

Quincy's point of view within *A Shady Street* captures the pictorial characteristics of the scene. The angle of the view, slightly above the street, enables a viewer to see the relationship of the manmade elements and nature as an observer of the scene. If the viewer was placed onto the street within the scene, he/she could not see the whole dimension of the work. This high, upper-story perspective was common for Quincy, as Zachary D. Ross observed: "most of his plein-air painting seemed to have been limited to views from hotel windows or studios."<sup>5</sup> Quincy could have possibly painted *A Shady Street* while observing it from a hotel window. Ross further noted that Quincy recorded details of historic places, but positioned himself at a "physical and psychological distance."<sup>6</sup> In *A Shady Street*, Quincy has recorded details of the architecture and texture of the street from a distant position, possibly a window, where he could contemplate what he was capturing within the scene. He has not only painted the scene as an artist, but also, Quincy's position in relation to the things represented in the work suggests that he was an "observer." The angle of reference for the scene allows the viewer to see the characteristics of the



relationship between nature and manmade things.

Quincy created a “portrait” of the shady street, the characteristics of which enhance the relationship between the two contrasting elements of manmade things and nature. Architecture would not have stood out as much without the light effects and the contrasting motions of the trees overhead. In turn, the nature of the scene would not have portrayed motion without the structure of the architecture below. Zachary D. Ross noted that, “His work clearly reveals the strengths of an academic education: the strong diagonals of the street scenes, gentle treatment of the landscape, and clear portrayal of sky and sunlight.”<sup>7</sup> Quincy used his skills to turn an ordinary street scene into a “portrait” full of character and motion.

Dorothy Paige Litz

1. Lloyd Goodrich, *Edward Hopper* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993), 119.
2. Virginia M. Mecklenburg, *Modern American Realism: The Sara Roby Foundation Collection* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press for the National Museum of American Art, 1987), n.p.
3. John I.H. Baur, *The Inlander: Life and Work of Charles Burchfield, 1893-1967* (New York: Cornwall Books, 1982), 118.
4. Paul Hayes Tucker, *Claude Monet: Life and Artist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 21.
5. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 13.
6. Ross, 13.

Vaudeville Stage, n.d.

Oil on academy board, 11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)

Signed: c.b.; ESTATE OF EDMUND QUINCY [estate stamp]

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000); *The Paintings of Edmund Quincy* (Newport, RI: The Art Association of Newport, 1943); *Edmund Quincy* (New York: Contemporary Arts Center, 1942).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 38, cat. 56; *Paintings by Edmund Quincy* exh. cat. (Newport, RI: The Art Association of Newport, 1943), n.p., cat. 21; *Edmund Quincy* exh. cat. (New York: Contemporary Arts Center, 1942), n.p., cat. 12.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

Edmund Quincy's *Vaudeville Stage* presents a glimpse of American vaudeville theatre, which was the main form of entertainment beginning at the turn of the twentieth century until around 1932.<sup>1</sup> With its roots in the minstrel shows of the nineteenth century, vaudeville was a variety show very popular amongst the working classes that often featured slapstick or satirical comedy, musical performances, and dance. However, at the time that Quincy would likely have been producing this painting (c. 1941, judging by the exhibition dates for the painting), vaudeville's popularity had already diminished.<sup>2</sup> Most of the theatres had been converted to movie houses and vaudeville was no longer that appealing to the public.<sup>3</sup>

Still, it seems that Quincy had chosen the subject matter as representative of a certain time and place: America before World War II. The choice of such a "low" form of entertainment as a subject reflects the ideas of the Ashcan school of the nineteenth century, the artists of which purposely chose to depict everyday life in a "realistic" manner.<sup>4</sup> Ashcan school artists like George Bellows and John Sloan painted scenes of working class leisure activities, such as boxing matches and dancing at clubs. These artists, who were influenced by the teachings of the famous realist Thomas Eakins at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, were interested in depicting the "grittiness" of urban life in America.<sup>5</sup> Many of the Ashcan artists were trained as newspaper reporters and, as such, recorded what they saw in as spontaneous a manner as possible.<sup>6</sup> The liveliness of their compositions was evocative of the types of people, places, and events they were depicting in their works. Quincy was also able to capture that same lively tone in his depiction of the vaudeville show.

Quincy's representation, most notably in his palette and composition, evokes the excitement and energy of vaudeville theatre. Quincy captures the flashiness and gaudiness of the show by using a vivid, saturated palette and by creating the effect of the intense stage lights. He conveys the excitement and spontaneity of the theatre by seemingly pausing time and suspending motion. He depicts the dancer mid-stride, the conductor still completing his direction to the orchestra, and the musicians in the midst of their accompaniment. The suspended movement of the painting echoes the cabaret posters of Toulouse-Lautrec,

most notably *Jane Avril au Jardin de Paris* (1893) and *Moulin Rouge-La Goulue* (1891).

These posters show the wild movement and bright lights of the theatre, capturing the spontaneity and temporality of the theatrical medium. The colors Quincy chose for his *Vaudeville Stage* mirror those used by Lautrec in the poster of Jane Avril. In the works of both artists, the bright hues of the performers contrast with the dark colors of the orchestra and spectators to emphasize the line where the stage ends and the audience begins.<sup>7</sup> In the poster of the famous (and infamous) dancer "La Goulue," the silhouettes of various audience members surround the performer, framing her movement. In Lautrec's posters, the elements of theatre outside of the stage (i.e., the accompanists and the audience) take on almost as essential a role as the performers themselves. Quincy similarly asserts the importance of these "outside" participants, placing himself, and thus the viewer, within the audience.

Edgar Degas created the same sense of separation in his depictions of the theatre. In his *Ballet à l'Opéra* (1877), Degas depicted the distance between the audience and the performers. The view of the stage, as in Quincy's painting, is partially obscured by the musicians in the orchestra pit; the dancers are blurred, and the details of their faces and costumes are difficult to decipher. The lack of clarity in the depiction of the performers emphasizes the anonymity of the theatre. The performers are playing parts and, in a sense, concealing their true identities. The anonymity of the audience is also implied in this representation. Intense light falls on the stage, while the audience remains in shadow thus "hiding" the faces of the spectators from the performers. In Quincy's painting, too, the audience is a dark, somewhat formless mass, and its individual members are unidentifiable. This reciprocal anonymity is an essential part of theatre's fictional nature, preserving the illusion of the show.<sup>8</sup>

The manner in which Quincy portrays his *Vaudeville Stage* is also reminiscent of Edward Hopper's *Girlie Show* (1941), a depiction not of vaudeville, but of its slightly more risqué counterpart, the burlesque theatre. Quincy and Hopper use similar techniques to capture the environment and atmosphere of the theatre. Both artists convey the physical space of the theatre by including the curtain and architectural details around the stage, rather than focusing solely on the performer. They both depict the orchestra in front of the stage playing the accompaniment and marking the separation between the performer and the audience. Quincy emphasizes this separation even more by including greater visual distance between himself and the performer. Judging by his simulated distance from the dancer and the musicians and by the level of the stage in his visual field, it seems as though Quincy was painting from one of the central orchestra seats farther back in the theatre (certainly not the best seat in the house).

By including the audience between himself and the stage, Quincy reveals his presence there. He is part of the darkened



audience, and is just another spectator. However, in depicting this distance, both paintings also convey the sense of “spectatorship” that is essential to theatre. These painters are not observing something natural, but rather something choreographed and composed. Whereas in some of his other paintings, *Boston Street* for example, Quincy is a passive observer watching the random scene out his window, in *Vaudeville Stage* he is a spectator, the difference being that the dancer (the subject) is not only aware of his presence, but is also performing for him as a member of the audience. He is not a passive observer, but is an essential part of the scene before him. In this painting, Quincy’s presence is not simply implied, but necessary. In identifying with Quincy as a member of the audience of the vaudeville show, the viewer is made to embrace fully his or her role as not just a passive observer, but a spectator.

Laura Hahn

1. Barbara Haskell, *The American Century: Art and Culture 1900-1950* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art in association with W.W. Norton and Co., 1999), 73.
2. *Paintings by Edmund Quincy* exh. cat. (Newport, RI: The Art Association of Newport, 1943), n.p., and *Edmund Quincy* exh. cat. (New York: Contemporary Arts Center, 1942), n.p., Hirschl & Adler Galleries archives.
3. Haskell, 73.
4. Ian Bennett, *A History of American Painting* (London: Hamlyn, 1973), 153.
5. Bennett, 153.
6. Haskell, 64.
7. Claire Frèches-Thory, Anne Roquebert, and Richard Thomson, *Toulouse-Lautrec* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 298.
8. Robert Gordon and Andrew Forge, *Degas* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1988), 169.

*Table by the Window*, n.d.

Oil on canvas, 27 x 21 1/4 in. (68.6 x 54 cm)

Unsigned

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000); *Paintings by Edmund Quincy* (New York: Contemporary Arts Center, 1945).

Published: Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 25, 33, cat. 6.

Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

In the painting, *Table by the Window* by Edmund Quincy, the viewer is placed directly at eye level with a figure of a woman seated alone at a table. The sun shining on the table immediately draws the viewer's attention by bringing out the warm cream and white tones of the tablecloth. The sun is shining through a large window behind the figure, which takes up almost half of the composition. Four ranges of horizontal lines split up the composition. The front edge of the table is the lowest horizontal line and the far end of the table sets a strong horizontal contrast between the table and the red wall. The red wall runs into the white windowsill and a wall outside is visible through the window. The wall outside forms another horizontal line ending right in front of the figure's face and takes the viewer's attention to the woman. The horizontal lines, however, are contrasted by vertical components in the painting. A beam behind the figure, the bottle and glasses on the table, and the architecture through the window as well as the figure's vertically-placed arm, pull the viewer's attention upward without dividing the composition. The arrangement of the composition causes the left side of the painting to look busier because the seated figure is not centered, but rather is arbitrarily placed on the left side. A wall behind the figure and the building through the window on the right-hand side set up a framing device. The figure is framed within these architectural elements.

The light source is directed through the window and lightly touches the inside of the wall and the chair behind the figure. The windowsill is illuminated by the light, and a shadow is cast on the white tablecloth by the wine bottle. There is a wide palette of vibrant colors ranging from a dark navy hat and rich red wall, to the light pink flower and bright blue sky. The highly-pitched tonal value in the curtain and tablecloth contrasts with the dark tones in the wine and sweater providing a wide tonal range.

This painting is not only a portrait of a woman, but also is a portrait of a restaurant. By depicting the light shining through a window on the woman seated by herself at a table, Quincy was able to capture "the mood of a girl dining alone."<sup>1</sup> Quincy achieved this effect by depicting not only her character, but also the character of the restaurant. This "portrait of a place" differs from other paintings by Quincy, for example, *Street Scene, Boston* where Quincy depicts a lively, energetic street corner.<sup>2</sup>

The focus in *Table by the Window* is not on a street corner, canal, or field. Instead, Quincy uses a single figure to represent the mood of the surroundings. The slight glimpse of chimneys and a building through the large window is all that indicates the specific location of the restaurant. However, Quincy presents more information about the restaurant with some of its characteristics, such as the lace curtain and ironed tablecloth. The intimate, secluded space allows for a select part of the restaurant to be seen by the viewer. It is not necessary to see the entire restaurant because Quincy shows the specific atmosphere of a public place.

The presence of the observer in the secluded area of the restaurant is apparent through proximity to the figure. It is possible that the viewer is sitting at the table with the figure or takes the place of a waiter standing by the table. The lack of space between the viewer and the figure creates a close, comfortable environment. However, the woman's face is covered, making it impossible to establish eye contact with her. Her elbow resting on the table and hand clenched under her chin pull the viewer's attention to her covered face. The woman is therefore inviting the viewer to her, but the viewer has no real access.

*Table by the Window* is strikingly similar to a painting by an artist contemporary to Quincy. Edward Hopper's *Automat*, painted in 1927, is also a portrait of a woman in a restaurant seated by herself. Rather than placing the viewer at the table with the figure, Hopper separates the viewer and subject with space. Although Hopper and Quincy have similar subject matters in their paintings, Hopper disconnects the viewer and the subject. Like Quincy, Hopper painted women in interiors and placed the figures near windows. The subject matter of a lone woman is an example of Hopper's skill for depicting solitude.<sup>3</sup> As Gail Levin stated, "solitude as a reoccurring theme in Hopper's oeuvre is often expressed through the portrayal of a lone figure in situations where other artists would depict crowds."<sup>4</sup> A restaurant is a public atmosphere where many figures could be depicted. Quincy could also have possibly placed the figure in solitude by the window to show a desire to get away from an overbearing crowded city. Levin discusses the idea of Hopper frequently using windows to indicate the need to "escape from the company of others."<sup>5</sup> Quincy may also be depicting his desire, or the desire of a working-class woman, to get away from the overpopulated city in *Table by the Window*.

The woman in this painting is depicted at a specific moment in time. One hand is clenched in a fist under the chin and the other is grasping the side of the table with her head slightly tilted down. The composition shows temporality not only in her body language, but also in the random cutting off of the scene. The restaurant or café also shows the temporality of Quincy's time reference. Quincy created this painting at a time when various cafés in Paris were directed towards the working class. The workers' café is described by Francisque Michel and Edouard Fournier as, "shelter for workers who want to eat a



snack and to wash it down with a glass of wine; the table always ready for someone who wants to eat a cutlet or cheese; the room is open to all comers.”<sup>6</sup> This description characterizes the scene and the time period in which this woman could be dining.

Quincy challenges the role of the viewer in this painting. The viewer is placed in the personal space of the figure and is surrounded by and is part of the atmosphere. At first glance, the painting is simply a woman seated alone with shadows and sections of horizontal color surrounding her. However, the proximity to the figure forces a viewer to contemplate further the scene. The painting is an image of a solitary woman eating alone, but there is also an underlying meaning of a desire for simplicity and

solitude and therefore, a need to escape from crowded city life.

Rebecca Magrane

1. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 25.
2. The phrase, “portrait of a place,” was inspired by a statement from Henry James in *Athenaeum Items: A Library Letter from The Boston Athenaeum* 61 (March 1955): n.p., as cited in Ross, 29.
3. Gail Levin, *Edward Hopper* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1984), 66.
4. Levin, 69.
5. Levin, 69.
6. Francisque Michel and Edouard Fournier, *Les Hôtelleries et les cabarets en France depuis la fin du XVI siècle à nos jours* (Paris: Delahys, 1859), 399, as cited in Scott W. Haine, *The World of the Paris Café: Sociability among the French Working Class, 1789-1914* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 60.

*Firenze, Strade sotto Villa Mercedes, Voltato L'Angolo*,  
c. 1942

Oil on canvas, 24 1/4 x 16 1/4 in. (61.6 x 41.3 cm)

Signed and inscribed: I.l.: Quincy; c.l.b: FIRENZE/STRADE SOTTO VILLA MERCEDE, VOLTATO L'ANGOLO

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).

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Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

It is probable that Quincy created *Firenze, Strade sotto Villa Mercedes, Voltato L'Angolo* with his other Italian paintings, including *Venice Canal*, in the early 1940s. It was after that trip that he began to exhibit his Italian paintings.<sup>1</sup> Quincy admitted to revising some of the titles of his works for his exhibition at Wellesley College in 1945. Therefore, it is possible *Firenze, Strade sotto Villa Mercedes, Voltato L'Angolo* may have been exhibited under a different title in the Wellesley exhibition.<sup>2</sup>

Quincy selected a scene that is identifiable as Italy primarily from the cypress and olive trees scattered in the landscape. The image is set in the outskirts of Florence, perhaps in the Belvedere area. Quincy captured a side of Florence that is quieter and more removed from the central urban areas.

*Firenze, Strade sotto Villa Mercedes, Voltato L'Angolo* shows how Quincy manipulated his palette to find the “character” of the location he was painting. Quincy often tailored his color choices to reveal his perception of the location. In this painting, Quincy captured a clear day in Tuscany as the daytime light subtly washed over the scene. In a few of his other works, like *Venice Canal* and *A Mediterranean Church*, he used brighter, dramatically different colors. Quincy painted with a soft and tonal palette in *Firenze, Strade sotto Villa Mercedes, Voltato L'Angolo* and excluded many contrasting colors. Instead, in his color selections, he included variations of the violet hue for many of the undertones and highlights. Quincy’s obvious application of violet and tonal colors can also be related to a few of Monet’s works that were done as studies of light throughout the day, such as the *Rouen Cathedral* and *Haystacks* series.<sup>3</sup> Monet dramatically showed the function of light on one subject at various times throughout the day. Therefore, it is not surprising that the color range Quincy used appears to be more limited, which is probably due to the time of day he is depicting. In addition, the paint is densely layered onto the surface which can also be related to “impressionist” techniques of using thick layers of paint.

Quincy carefully intertwined cityscape and landscape to create balance and depth in his composition. A figure looks out onto the scene as a row of trees recedes back into a landscape with buildings scattered and layered into it. The buildings are each shown at an angle that creates diagonals and depth. These

diagonals lead the viewer into the background and back to the foreground. The composition works in a circular way with the buildings and landscape responding to the figure in the foreground, allowing the viewer’s eye to move through the work over and over again. The depth created in the composition acts as a conversation between the figure and the cityscape. The relationship of the figure to the rest of the setting gives the painting a tranquil and reflective quality as the figure is alone, gazing out onto the Tuscan scene.

The figure seems paused in a moment that does not give this painting the same kind of bustling effect that is more obvious in some of Quincy’s other works like *Street Scene, Boston*, where figures are shown in motion. Quincy did a number of his works in industrialized and populated New England and European areas. These regions were more developed and indicative of an active urban culture. Through placing the figure paused in a serene setting, this painting reveals the slower pace of life in this region outside of the central parts of the city.

Quincy took a “voyeuristic” approach in looking onto a quiet moment of a solitary man as he gazes onto the landscape. Quincy was positioned behind the figure and painted while the figure may have been unaware of his presence. The way in which Quincy framed the composition suggests he was interfering with the figure’s solitary moment.

Quincy painted the figure fairly close-up and only included the one person. The figure is awkwardly positioned in the foreground. The way in which Quincy painted the figure is not as strong, technically, as the rest of the work. Quincy invites us in to share the same view as the man, but the figure is unbelievable, visually, which prevents the viewer from comfortably connecting to the human aspect of the scene. Even if the figure was not intended to be a focal point, it is so undeveloped that it becomes the primary visual focus and consequently, the figure acts as a curious juxtaposition to the rest of the composition. Quincy created this work in the middle of his career after he had years of experience with the figure. By the 1940s, Quincy already successfully completed a number of paintings, including figural depictions and even portraits.<sup>4</sup> In 1927, he studied in Paris under Georges-Leo Degorce who was known for landscapes and the nude. After he returned to Boston later that year, Quincy continued to work on his own landscapes, still life, and nudes.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, it is difficult to understand why Quincy shows the figure in such a nondescript manner.

Quincy did not always include many figures in his paintings. However, he always suggested a human mark on a landscape or cityscape. In his painting of the *Haystacks, Giverny*, he depicted the hay bundled up for the harvest which shows that the landscape had been touched by people.<sup>6</sup> Figures, however, are not necessarily what Quincy tried to capture but rather, the atmosphere of a specific location. On the other hand, Quincy’s consistent effort to include figures helps the viewer to connect to the setting. In *Firenze, Strade sotto Villa Mercedes, Voltato*



*L'Angolo*, he included a figure and manmade structures, both of which are set into a landscape. Through his intricate incorporation of these images within his composition, Quincy shows his ability to capture the beauty of a place.

Susannah Haworth

1. Passports with Italian stamps, Hirschl & Adler Galleries archives.
2. A letter to Miss Abbott dated October 10, 1945 about his show, Wellesley College archives.
3. Paul Hayes Tucker, *Claude Monet: Life and Artist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 4.
4. Exhibition pamphlet from before 1940, Hirschl & Adler Galleries archives.
5. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 21.
6. Tucker, 135, made this observation with respect to Monet's haystack paintings.

*Elevated Train, Boston, n.d.*

Oil on canvas, 16 1/2 x 19 in. (41.9 x 48.3 cm)

Signed: l.r.: Quincy

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).

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Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

*Elevated Train, Boston* is a painting of a Boston street that runs under a railroad track. It is one of Edmund Quincy's variety of cityscapes, images that make up a vast portion of his known body of paintings. This painting captures a moment on this city street through simple forms and blended color patches in Quincy's style of very visible brushwork. *Elevated Train, Boston* is an idealized perception of a small street in Boston, giving the viewer a vision of a picture-perfect American city with a subtle beauty in the color of the buildings and the gentle light falling across the scene.

Quincy shows a strong attachment to his home city of Boston in a number of his cityscapes. B.J. Kospoth of the *Chicago Tribune* commented in 1930 that, "his eyes are full of the beauty of ancient red-brick mansions facing on quiet squares and he paints them with the strength and delicacy that is born of affection and understanding."<sup>1</sup> Quincy depicts distinctly "American" city qualities through architecture, layout of streets and buildings, trees and parks, figures, and activity in his images. Maude Riley of *Art Digest* wrote in reference to Quincy's final exhibition in New York City at the Contemporary Arts Center in 1945 that, "Quincy also paints Massachusetts towns and gardens near his present home. Again atmosphere of place is strong and he makes charming scenes—stepped up, of course, in color; for none but the most unobservant ever paint France and the U.S. in the same light or with the same palette."<sup>2</sup>

Quincy had a connection to Boston and painted it as a known and cherished location. He often placed his viewer at ground level in his Boston cityscapes to show his familiarity with the various neighborhoods, from large brownstones to quaint colorful suburban homes, to industrial areas with smoke and water tanks. Though he had strong ties to Europe, there was more opportunity for originality in painting Boston because it lacked the history of having been rendered in paintings in contrast to European cities which were more commonly represented.

The linear elements shape the image by creating a composition that has been broken into sections: the architecture lining the sides, the road below the tracks, and the skyline above the tracks. Though these lines directing the angles of the composition have a sharp linear effect, most of the brushstrokes in this painting are noticeable and textured, and there are sections where gaps in the paint are visible as a result of Quincy's seem-

ingly rapid and active brushwork. There is a strong resemblance between the visible canvas that remains in this image and the effect achieved by painting with watercolor on paper, which is usually a more rapid and less detailed medium often used for quick studies and exercises in painting.

Through Quincy's shaping of perspective from the left side of the road, and the angle showing the sidewalk extending just in front of the viewer, the painting creates the illusion that the viewer is not only observing the scene, but is also within it. The viewer appears to be standing, and possibly walking, down the street toward the vanishing point a block behind and opposite the figure on the right side of the image. Placing the viewer at the edge of the composition in this way is engaging, especially when conveying the personality of a space or location like Quincy does with his images of Boston.

The lighting in *Elevated Train, Boston*, which creates long, soft shadows, expresses a distinct time of day when the sun is either rising or setting. These indicators of surrounding are very important to Quincy, shaping his perception of the location and the moment, and conveying them to the viewer. Lighting allows the viewer to focus on Quincy's interpretation of the scene by depicting "the sensation produced by a landscape,"<sup>3</sup> which was one of the ideals of the early Impressionists that appears to inform the majority of Quincy's paintings. His sense of familiarity in his work promotes the "personification" of place that Quincy crafts from his reaction to his location.

*Elevated Train, Boston* contains other elements that give the viewer a sense of paused time. The three smaller forms in the image are a dog, a figure, and a car. The car appears to be parked, but the figure is in motion walking away from the viewer on the other side of the road. The dog is looking down the street with his tail curled up in the air, a very active position for such an animal. The painting's sense of motion and changing surroundings create a temporality that captures a shifting moment. Gail Levin has remarked about the paintings of Edward Hopper, a contemporary of Quincy who painted cityscapes and architectural images, that "when figures do appear in a cityscape they are often diminished, insignificant in relation to the massive architectural environment."<sup>4</sup> Though Quincy's architecture is not quite as massive in appearance as Hopper's, the figure is used as a similar device by appearing faceless and walking away from the compositional entry to the image, just as the dog is facing away from it as well. The figure stands as a fraction of the visual expression of the moment and assists in developing a context for the painting. These forms are also all facing toward the focal point of the image and assist in creating a sense of motion toward the center of the composition.

This sense of time is then enforced by the changing light that forms many darkly shadowed portions in the painting and leaves powerful highlights, such as the green tower that stands in the center of the image. The brightness of the tower contrasts with the shadow on the tracks that is facing the viewer and sets



the sun at a particular angle, determining this gently lit hour of day. The colors within the image are extremely saturated and help to create vibrancy and glow in this softly-lit setting.

The sense of observation is apparent in the alternating highlights and shadows, which are then mimicked by the alternating red and yellow buildings. These color patterns and compliments are rhythms that Quincy experiments with in his paintings to activate motion in the image and reaction in the viewer. These choices express Quincy's talent for compositional construction and his focus on providing the viewer with a distinctly Bostonian experience from his personal perspective of the city. This combination leaves the viewer not only aesthetically satisfied with the compositional elements of the painting, but also with a strong sense of the essence of Quincy's devotion to his location.

Cassie Lynott

1. B.J. Kospoth, "Edmond [sic] Quincy's American Paintings," *Chicago Tribune (Paris edition)*, June 1, 1930, n.p., as cited in Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000), 14.
2. Maude Riley, "Nostalgia for France," *Art Digest* XIX, no. 16 (May 15, 1945): 10, as cited in Ross, 25.
3. Jules-Antoine Castagnary, "The Exhibition on the Boulevard des Capucines," in *Art in Theory 1815-1900*, ed. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood with Jason Gaiger (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 573.
4. Gail Levin, *Edward Hopper: The Art and the Artist* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1980), 45.

*Haystacks, Giverny, n.d.*

Oil on canvas, 23 1/2 x 28 1/2 in. (59.7 x 72.4 cm)

Signed: l.r.: Quincy

Exhibited: *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 2000).

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Courtesy of Hirschl & Adler Galleries, NYC

Edmund Quincy constantly traveled back and forth to Europe throughout his career. He spent the majority of his time studying in Paris during his early years as an artist where his style began to develop. In the late 1920s, Quincy began to show his paintings in group exhibitions and then in 1930, he exhibited his paintings in his first one-man show at Galerie d'Art Contemporain in Paris.<sup>1</sup> Quincy's exhibition was widely acclaimed and helped launch his career.<sup>2</sup> Quincy continued to exhibit his American and European paintings in Paris all the way through the 1950s.<sup>3</sup>

Quincy's *Haystacks, Giverny* depicts the popular and frequently painted countryside of Giverny in northern France, made famous by Monet's series of haystack paintings completed in the late 1880s. Despite the frequent portrayals of this site, Quincy's painting is a unique rendition of Giverny because it presents the landscape the way that he wanted to see it. The painting's saturated color palette, warm highlights, and natural elements, untouched by manmade structures and figures, create a harmonious, idyllic atmosphere that celebrates the charm and beauty of this popular location. Quincy has captured the essence of Giverny, and he presents a scene that is unique to this particular place as well as to his own experience of it.

*Haystacks, Giverny* has a texture and style that resemble the works of Impressionists, such as those by Monet that also represent the haystacks and landscape of Giverny. Quincy's focus on light and shadow, both of which contain a soft violet hue, is reminiscent of many Impressionist depictions of light. His visible brushwork layers colors with small paint strokes, adding dimension to the image. These obvious layers of careful over-painting show that *Haystacks, Giverny* was not completed as an "impression" on sight, but rather the shifting light and motion in the brushwork create a painting that compels the viewer to recall the paintings of the Impressionist movement.

There is an obvious connection to Monet in the subject matter of this painting. Monet also painted a series of haystacks in Giverny in different light, weather conditions, and times of day during the late 1880s. Like Monet, Quincy utilized an "impressionist" palette. Various shades of violet dominate the shadows in both Monet's and Quincy's works. Rough brushstrokes reveal numerous different colors in every centimeter of the paintings. However, Quincy's haystacks differ from Monet's in their compositional layout. Monet's haystacks were depicted

with very little detail in the background. Quincy incorporates the haystacks as an aspect of his landscape in the composition, along with the changing colors of the grass, the verticality of the trees, and the curvilinear shapes of the hills.

Quincy did not include humans or architecture in *Haystacks, Giverny* and therefore, it is his purest landscape. Quincy captured the vast landscape of agriculture within the scene where the rolling hills and the patterned fields enhance the environment. Natural color and design evoke an unrefined atmosphere of crisp agriculture. The essence of nature is represented in the simplicity and elegance of the landscape. Small, quaint haystacks draw the viewer into the foreground, which then lead him or her over the rolling hills and into the background. The complexity and structure of architecture and people are not needed within this landscape; the simple pattern of nature is enough to evoke a viewer's interest.

The range of tonality in most of Quincy's works, and specifically in *Haystacks, Giverny* and *The Garden Wall*, illustrates both depth and perspective. The loose application of paint in these works creates the visual effect of luminosity in the leaves of the trees and ground. Quincy also used light to create depth in both paintings, which is important to the sense of movement in both. These landscapes have manmade elements, which are distinguished from the fluidity of their natural surroundings. While the manmade elements are fixed in Quincy's *The Garden Wall*, the manmade elements in *Haystacks, Giverny* are suggested only by the baling of the haystacks.

Quincy created an atmosphere in this painting that surrounds the spectator. Instead of focusing on a single haystack, Quincy depicted not only the haystacks themselves, but also the environment around them. Therefore, the trees and fields around the haystacks provide a location with which the viewer can relate to the haystacks. The viewer is placed within the environment at the bottom of the hill, taking the place of Quincy as he made the painting. This placement allows for the spectator to be located where a haystack may have been standing. The spectator is therefore able to perceive the essence of the location and take the place of the painter within the composition.

Quincy was able to portray a particular moment in time in his painting. He conveys the time of day (most likely afternoon), through the intensity of the light and the long, dark shadows cast by the haystacks. He also shows the season in which the scene takes place since hay is gathered at a certain time of year, after the flush of the farming season. More subtly, Quincy created a sense of movement in his painting. The clouds look as if they are rolling through the sky, being pushed by the wind—a wind that is perhaps blowing with the change of seasons and suggesting that this scene is only temporary. *Haystacks, Giverny* epitomizes Quincy's unique vision, and that of the viewer, in depicting the temporality and character of his subject.



Anna Alston Donnelly, Laura Hahn, Susannah Haworth,  
Dorothy Paige Litz, Cassie Lynott, Rebecca Magrane,  
Courtney Scally, Kristin Schmehl, Hilary Smith

1. Zachary D. Ross, *Spirit of the Past: The Paintings of Edmund Quincy, 1903-1997* exh. cat. (New York: Hirsch & Adler Galleries, 2000), 13, 14.
2. Ross, 17.
3. Ross, 26.





