The Burton Barr Central Library Art Collection

A Virtual Tour
Ronald Cruickshank was a Scottish weaver and designer. He combined simple modernist design with a medieval approach to weaving. Cruickshank studied throughout Europe and taught at both Edinburgh and Lafayette, Louisiana. This tapestry was on display as part of celebrations honoring Queen Elizabeth’s coronation in 1954. Phoenician Margaret Bell bought it from the artist and donated it to the library that same year.
Arnaldo Pomodoro
Il Cubo (1964-1967)
Arnaldo Pomodoro

Il Cubo (1964-1967)
1st Floor, Lobby

Bronze, limited edition, no. 2 of 2.

The sculpture was housed in the Phoenix Convention Center before moving to the Burton Barr Central Library in 1995. Arnaldo Pomodoro is an internationally-renowned Italian sculptor. Born in 1926, he was trained in architecture and later worked as a stage designer and jeweler. He created monumental bronze caste forms influenced by his fascination with technology.
Howard Post
Ranch in the Hills (1989)
Howard Post

Ranch in the Hills (1989)

1st Floor, Book Drop Area

Oil on canvas.
Gift of Brown and Bain.

Howard Post is a native of the Tucson area. Raised on a family ranch, he tended livestock and practiced rodeo. He earned a Master’s degree in fine arts from the University of Arizona, where he taught for two years. Having worked as a commercial artist, Post pursued his passion for painting the Southwest in oils and pastels. He achieved a unique style using bright colors, high perspectives and strong shadows.
Fritz Scholder
Millennium #8 (1997)
Fritz Scholder
Millennium #8 (1997)
1st Floor, Checkout Area

Oil on canvas.
Gift of the artist.

Fritz Scholder is an internationally-renowned artist whose work was instrumental in breaking down stereotyped perspectives of American Indian art. Part Luiseño Indian, Scholder combined pop art with abstract expressionism to create a more contemporary American Indian perspective. He received a MFA from the University of Arizona and taught painting at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico.
Merrill Mahaffey

Zoroaster Shoreline (1989)
Merrill Mahaffey
Zoroaster Shoreline (1989)
1st Floor, Checkout Area

Acrylic on canvas
Gift of the artist.

Merrill Mahaffey is known for his monumental Southwestern landscapes. Born in New Mexico, he studied art in California and Arizona and earned a MFA from Arizona State University. He taught design and art history at Phoenix College. Mahaffey’s work bridges realism with modernism in his exploration of the western landscape.
Ed Mell

Fleeting Clouds / Sedona (1994)
Golden Light / Lake Powell (1993)
1st Floor, Near Customer Service
Ed Mell
Shadows on the South Rim (1995)
1st Floor, Lobby – Guard Station

Lithograph.
Gift of the artist through Suzanne Brown Gallery.

Ed Mell is a native of Phoenix and has a background in graphic arts. He studied design in Los Angeles and worked as an Art Director in a New York advertising agency. Mell returned to the Valley, where he successfully established an illustration firm with his brother. He pursued an interest in landscapes and transitioned from commercial artist to painter. Mell has become a preeminent artist of iconic Southwest imagery.
Donato Giavanni began his professional career in New York as studio assistant to figure painter Vincent Desiderio. He went on to pursue imaginative science fiction works for publishers, design firms and film. Giavanni has received three Hugo awards for outstanding professional work.
Library Centennial Quilt
(1998)
Library Centennial Quilt
(1998)
1st Floor, Bridges to America Area

Quilt by community members

The Centennial quilt was designed and sewn in 1997 to commemorate the Phoenix Public Library’s first 100 years of service. Constructed of cotton fabrics, the quilt features embroidery, piecing, appliqué and quilting. The glass case was constructed in Frankfurt, Germany by Glasbau Hahn in order to preserve and permanently display the quilt.
Joan Waters
*Alight in the Garden (2004)*
Joan Waters
1st Floor, Assistive Technology Center

Multimedia.
Gift in memory of Cay Culbertson.

Joan Waters earned her BFA from The Maryland Institute. She moved to Phoenix in 1989 and took a welding class at Mesa Community College. Waters has since incorporated metalwork into her brightly colored paintings.
American cartoonist Bil Keane created *The Family Circus*, using his young family as the model. He was a self-taught artist and moved to Paradise Valley in 1959. Keane’s popular cartoon was awarded the Arizona Heritage Award in 1998.
Shonto Begay

*My Storyrock II (1992)*
American Indian artist Shonto Begay grew up on the Navajo Reservation in Shonto, Arizona. He studied at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe and California College of Arts and Crafts. Begay’s work encompasses Navajo culture, legends and his personal experiences of self discovery.
Just like that!
Word by word,
From first to last!
I’m sleeping with
This book in bed,
This first FIRST book
I’ve ever read!

My Book!
I did it!
I did it!
Come and look
At what I’ve done!
I read a book!
When someone wrote it
Long ago
For me to read,
How did he know
That this was the book
I’d take from the shelf
And lie on the floor
And read by myself?
I really read it!
Just like that!
Word by word
From first to last!
I’m sleeping with
This book in bed,
This first FIRST book
I’ve ever read!

-David L. Harrison-
Gayle Novak
The Soloist (1994)
2nd Floor, Magazines & Newspaper Department

Oil on canvas.
Gift of Robert Cocke.

Gayle Joy Novak is a nationally-recognized abstract artist. Her paintings were inspired by the southwest desert. Originally from Ohio, Novak studied at Arizona State University and earned a MFA in 1984. She was coordinator for Art Education at ASU West and established the Foundation for the Interdisciplinary Arts curriculum in 1989.
Lost Styrofoam process. Gift of the artist and Will Bruder.

Italian architect Paolo Soleri has been active in Arizona since the 1950s. He studied under Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesien West, designing the model city Arcosanti using the concept of “arcology,” architecture in harmony with ecology.
Raymond Phillips Sanderson
Gambel Quail
2nd Floor, Arizona Room

Wood Sculpture.
Gift of the Kachina School of Art.

Raymond Phillips Sanderson, a native of Missouri, has been an active Arizona artist since the early 1930s. He explored modernism in sculpture and mural painting as a WPA artist.
Merrill Mahaffey
Zoroaster Shoreline (1989)
Merrill Mahaffey
Zoroaster Shoreline (1989)
John Farnsworth
Niman (Kachina)
2nd Floor, Arizona Room

Watercolor painting.
Gift of the artist through Suzanne Brown Gallery.

John Farnsworth was born in Williams, Arizona in 1941. With little formal training, he captured his fascination of the North Country, using iconographic Southwest imagery from first hand experiences to depict Western life.
Genevieve Reckling
Stone Waterfall Sabino Canyon (1989)
Genevieve Reckling

Stone Waterfall Sabino Canyon (1989)
2nd Floor, Arizona Room

Oil on canvas. Gift of the artist.

Genevieve Reckling is a contemporary Southwestern artist, in whose work water is a recurring theme. She studied art in Texas and at Arizona State University, settling in Phoenix in 1968. Reckling uses a photographic reference process for inspiration.
Louie Ewing
Navajo Blankets (1942)
Louie Ewing

Navajo Blankets (1942)

2nd Floor, Arizona Room Hallway

Serigraphs: set of 15 from the collection of the Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Louie Ewing was an innovator of silkscreen serigraphy in the Southwest. He mastered the technique during the WPA’s Federal Art Project and taught the process at the Indian School in Santa Fe. The Navajo Blanket serigraphs are part of a portfolio representing design specimens from the period of 1850 to 1910.
Ray Fink
Frank's Fantasy Forest (1981)
Ray Fink

Frank’s Fantasy Forest
3rd Floor

Oil on canvas.
Gift of Frank and Lorain Kadish.

Ray Fink studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Illinois Institute of Design. He moved to the Valley to head the design program at Arizona State University. Fink reacted against 1950s abstractionism and frequently incorporated World War II experiences into his artwork. “Frank’s Fantasy Forest” was commissioned by Frank Kadish to fill a large wall in his office. The painting was relocated and hung above the circulation desk at the original Central Library on McDowell until the construction of the new library on Central Ave.
Southern artist Dale Kennington began her career after failing to find a suitable artist to paint her children. She developed her own camera technique called “rapid-fire sketchbook” to create a “happening.” The multiple images were then assembled to produce a fictional event.
George Elbert Burr

Etchings (1920s)
George Elbert Burr
Etchings (1920s)
4th Floor, near Lecture Room

Set of 34 etchings presented by Mrs. John C. Lincoln. On loan from the City’s Portable Works Collection.

George Elbert Burr is an American artist and printmaker. He briefly studied at the Art Institute of Chicago before working at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, producing prints for catalogues. Burr relocated to Phoenix in 1924, where he created etchings of the Sonoran desert.
Joan Miro
*Pigmies sur la Lune* (1893-1983)
4th Floor, Rare Book Room

Original aquatint on Arches paper in a limited edition, signed by the artist and numbered “HC.”

Gift of Dr. Richard and Judith Lovins.
Joan Miro
Marvillas (1893-1983)
4th Floor, Rare Book Room

Original lithograph on Arches paper in a limited edition, signed by the artist. Number 50 of 75.

Gift of Dr. Richard and Judith Lovins.
Marc Chagall
Bible Study (1887-1985)
4th Floor, Rare Book Room

Original lithograph on Arches paper, signed by the artist. Number 13 of 15.

Gift of Richard and Judith Lovins.
John Waddell
Marlo (1977)
Courtyard on north side of building

Born in Iowa, John Waddell has lived in Arizona since 1957. He trained at the Art Institute of Chicago and moved to the Southwest to head the Art Education Department at Arizona State University. In 1964, Waddell became a full-time sculptor. He received commissions to create major works for downtown Phoenix in 1970. Waddell is best known for his bronze sculptures of the female nude in motion.

Bronze sculpture.
Gift of Everett and Elaine Warner.
Steel molds.

The weathered formwork elements are “totems” of tribute and thanks to the design and construction teams of Burton Barr Central Library. The four molds were used to precast the 204 columns that support the building.
Jerome Kirk
Phoenix Bird Ascending
North Driveway Median

Metal kinetic sculpture.
Municipal Art Collection.
Jerome Kirk
Tiered Orbits
North Driveway Median

Red painted kinetic sculpture.
Municipal Art Collection.