



**Jasper Francis Cropsey**  
(1823-1900)  
*Autumn Vista*  
1875  
oil on canvas, ca. 12 x 20 in.  
Questroyal Fine Art



**Sanford Robinson Gifford**  
(1823-1880)  
*Mountain Lake*  
oil on canvas, ca. 12 x 10 in.  
Questroyal Fine Art



**Thomas Moran**  
(1837-1926)  
*Nutting, Autumn*  
1864  
oil on canvas, ca. 16 x 20 in.  
Questroyal Fine Art

## ART FOR AUTUMN by N.F. Karlins

Making a tour of Chelsea's contemporary galleries, I noticed the maples beginning to flame and the sweet gums turning maroon. I hungered after a trip up the Hudson to see the leaves before their autumnal strip tease. Unable to get away at the moment, I did the next best thing and went up Park Avenue to [Questroyal Fine Art](#).

Owned by Louis M. Salerno and his son, Brent, who kindly pointed out their newest acquisitions, the gallery specializes in American art and always has a good selection of Hudson River paintings. Visitors get a warm welcome, and the paintings are shown in a domestic setting rather than against cold white walls.

I came searching for color-drenched fall scenes from the 19th century, and I did find some to those, but also discovered a terrific Luminist painting, an interesting American genre scene, a couple of 20th-century knock-outs and even an exciting oddity.

The season is the subject of two works by [Jasper Francis Cropsey](#), a Hudson River School painter noted for his bright autumnal scenes. *Autumn Vista* (1875) is raked with strong light that picked out some cows on a rocky escarpment in the foreground as trees from green to red and every shade in between ran down to the Hudson River. *Mounts Adam and Eve* (1872) records a spot in Orange County north of New York City with even more trees in high-keyed autumnal colors.

For drama, *Mountain Lake*, a small oil by [Sanford Robinson Gifford](#), is hard to beat. A man in a canoe sits placidly mid-lake with yellow, orange, and red trees glimpsed in a ray of light. But the light is filtered through a swirling mass of clouds, operatically whipped above a peak. Just barely visible are some tiny buildings halfway down its rocky side. Very Wagnerian! You hope that the fellow in the canoe can get back to those buildings fast.

A more pastoral scene of fall is *Nutting* (1864) by [Thomas Moran](#), better known for his scenes of the West that assisted in the creation of Yellowstone National Park. Several small figures in a woodland bend to gather nuts, separated from the viewer by a meandering stream. It's easy to get lost in this tranquil fall setting.

Equally enjoyable is a small gem by [Jervis McEntee](#), *Autumn Light* from 1874. Roughly 4 x 6 in., it packs in a fall scene with the sun over a misty mountain in the background with a body of water in the foreground with trees and brush in between. The strange, charged light unifies the scene and imbues it with a transcendental feeling.

Turning from other Hudson River works, I really gasped at a seascape by [James Augustus Suydam](#) of *Newport Beach* (1863). OK, it's not the Hudson. And its muted tones are a far cry from those of Cropsey's incendiary oaks and maples. But Suydam, a New Yorker who studied at NYU, was mentored by the Hudson River painter [John Frederick Kensett](#) and is an important artist of the period.



**Jervis McEntee**  
(1828-1891)  
*Autumn Light*  
1874  
oil on board, ca 5 x 6 in.  
Questroyal Fine Art



**James A. Suydam**  
(1819-1865)  
*Newport Beach*  
1863  
oil on canvas, ca. 18 x 30 in.  
Questroyal Fine Art



**John George Brown**  
(1831-1913)  
*Have a Drink*  
oil on canvas, ca. 24 x 17 in.  
Questroyal Fine Art



Suydam's Luminist paintings don't come any better than this atmospheric scene of a gray coast with a sailboat. The air is so super-saturated that you can almost smell the water in it. Suydam is a wonderful artist, who started his art career late and died early, so there aren't many opportunities to see his work, especially a painting this good.

I like genre paintings and found a standout in *Have a Drink* by **John George Brown**, who is more associated with paintings of street urchins, particularly paper boys. But in this canvas, a neatly dressed young girl with a hair ribbon invites the viewer to share some water from a well in a rural setting. I found the construction of the well as interesting as the figure. If you like mechanical things, this one's for you.

Two 20th-century pieces wowed me. One is a large watercolor by the Regionalist **Thomas Hart Benton**, *Swing Your Partner* (1945). Here, Benton's figures are painted with his trademark Michelangelesque musculature that's elongated like pulled taffy. They have been set in motion by country music from a guitar and violin. People clap, sing, and gesticulate, as one man falls down on the plank floor. To the right, the viewer sees a bit of yellow skirt disappearing from the picture, dancing away. It's a joyous party that's so raucous that the drawing has an edge to it. It's got color, action and a great composition. Some museum should pounce.

Another thrill came from **George Wesley Bellows'** *Flaming Breaker* (1913). Bellows was associated with the Ashcan School, but this lush oil of the Maine coast shows his versatility. Thick slabs of brown paint make the rocks and squiggles of white conjure the breaker whose salt spray you can almost taste.

One final reason for a visit to Questroyal is a painting on stone. Yes, stone. It is by **Mauritz F. de Haas**, a Dutch-born artist who was acclaimed for his naval scenes and marines in this country. I hadn't heard of him before, but I will look for him again. Measuring not quite 4 x 6 in., his *Great Head, Isle of Shoals* with miniscule figures on a cliff overlooking the sea with a sailboat below them and gulls soaring would be a remarkable painting even if it were not on stone.

Questroyal Fine Art, 903 Park Avenue (at 79th Street), Suites 3A & B, New York, N.Y. 10075

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**Thomas Hart Benton**

(1889-1975)

*Swing Your Partner*

1945

watercolor and gouache on paper, ca. 23  
x 32 in.



**George Wesley Bellows**

(1882-1925)

*Flaming Breaker*

1913

oil on panel, 15 x ca. 20 in.

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**Mauritz Frederik de Haas**

(1832-1895)

*Great Head, Isle of Shoals*

oil on stone, ca 4 x 6 in.

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