Walsh Library Gallery presents

Henry Gasser: Beyond City Limits

April 1 – June 28, 2004

Curated by Gary T. Erbe

Reception April 14, 2004
6 p.m.– 9 p.m.
Gallery talk at 7:30 p.m. by Gary T. Erbe

“Post World War II Newark - Tales of Decline and Conflict”
A lecture by historian Dr. Clement A. Price
Monday, April 19th, 2004 - 2 p.m.

Sponsored by
The Multicultural Program and the Department of Art and Music
at Seton Hall University

Organized by
The Butler Institute of American Art, OH
in conjunction with
The Morris Museum, NJ, Springfield Art Museum, MO
and Seton Hall University, NJ
Henry Gasser: Beyond City Limits

"I have always been interested in the painting of street scenes," quotes Henry Gasser in one of his many art books he authored during his illustrious career.

Henry Gasser was born in Newark, NJ in 1909. Newark, being the largest city in the state was bursting with energy and would be a source of inspiration for many of Gasser's most important works. From childhood, he felt a connection everyday with people going about their business in a city interspersed with commercial high rises, row houses, majestic movie theaters and large private homes. Newark is also home of one of New Jersey's premiere art museums, which undoubtedly Gasser made frequent visits.

Newark was known for its commerce, breweries, jewelry factories and many taverns dispersed throughout this hectic, crowded and energetic city. Perhaps, it was Henry's calling to respond to these surroundings through his art. Henry's Newark paintings go beyond aesthetics. They show vitality, reality and even the imperfection of man's relationship with a place in time frozen forever. Henry captured a significant period in America. Wandering the streets with a sketch book in hand was not uncommon for Gasser, in fact, many of his works began as impromptu quick sketches which would be refined and expanded in his studio. His mission was to discover, to document and to be challenged.

"Even the most fragmentary sketch can form the basis for a future painting far better than the sharpest of photographs." One of the earliest works in the exhibition "Waterfront" (catalogue number 7) is not a literal transcription of a site, rather it is a composite painting, inspired from reality and composed in his studio. Henry always referred back to his important quick sketches as a reference. Henry was a master of dramatizing his subject at the expense of absolute accuracy. But isn't that what all good story tellers do.

In Gasser's early years, he had the good fortune to meet the artist John R Grabach (1880-1981), and was greatly influenced by his subject matter and painting techniques. Grabach was an Ashcan school practitioner and soon became a father figure and mentor to Gasser. You can see a parallel in both these masters of grit and grime. Gasser and Grabach also made frequent trips to Cape Ann, MA which became a favorite subject for Henry. His wonderful snow scenes of New England have been widely acclaimed and considered some of his finest works. They have so much in common. Both painted in alla prima, direct painting technique. In fact, Henry's early works echo the Ashcan school in subject, style and composition, yet he was his own man. He was an original who had an extra ordinary ability to manipulate paint as illustrated in "Intersection" (cover illustration). This wonderful painting transcends reality by embellishing his subject with strong color which heightens the pictorial composition.

Newark had jump started its commercial growth at the beginning of the 20th Century. Henry was at the right place at the right time. The activity was so enormous and exciting that it became a magnet for artists seeking stimulation. Henry studied at The Newark School of Fine and Industrial Arts, later to become a teacher there and subsequent Director of this institution. Henry saw the urban landscape becoming increasingly dreary and he sought to inject beauty in his own language of painting. Henry witnessed the suffering of people brought
Skyline, c. 1940's
Watercolor on paper
22 ½ x 31
Courtesy of Dr. and Mrs. Stanley Becker

Johnstown Street, c. 1940
Watercolor
22 ½ x 31
Courtesy of Angela Gross

Spartenberg, c. 1940's
Casein on paper
22 x 30
Private Collection

Factory Workers, 1946
Oil on panel
9 x 12
Collection of David Band

Scene in Newark, c.1940’s
Watercolor and gouache
24 ¼ x 19 ½
Collection of The Morris Museum
(Gift of Joseph and Barbara Montouro)

Afternoon Glow, c. 1940’s
Watercolor and gouache on paper
17 ½ x 23 ½
Collection of The Morris Museum
(Gift of Joseph and Barbara Montouro)

From Hamilton Hill, c. 1940’s
Casein
19 ½ x 24 ½
Collection of Chagit and Peter Heller

Dark Vista, c. 1940’s
Watercolor on paper
19 ½ x 24 ½
Private Collection
Springtime, c. 1940’s
Watercolor on paper
16 x 22
Private Collection

Homeward, c. 1940’s
Oil on panel
9 x 12
Private Collection

Newark in Winter, c. 1940’s
Watercolor on paper
17 ¾ x 22
Private Collection

Fixed Bayonets, c. 1945
Watercolor on paper
4 x 7
Collection of David Band

Sleeping Soldier, c. 1940’s
Watercolor on paper
5 x 7
Private Collection

Highway Diner, c. 1940’s
Watercolor
11 x 15
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

The Edge of Town, c. 1940’s
Watercolor
14 x 21
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

Washline, c. 1940’s
Watercolor
7 x 9 ½
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker
Dancing, c. 1940's
Gouache
14 ½ x 20 ½
Collection of The Morris Museum
(Gift of Joseph and Barbara Montouro)

Gloucester, c. 1940’s
Graphite on paper
14 x 22
Estate of Milton Gelman

Pennsylvania Slagg Hill, c. 1940’s
Watercolor
15 x 22
Estate of Milton Gelman

Cape Ann Winter, c. 1950’s
Watercolor on paper
9 x 12
Private Collection

Winter Street, c. 1950
Watercolor on paper
8 x 10
Collection of David Band

December Morning, c. 1950
Oil on canvas
30 x 36
Collection of David Band

Bermuda Blue, c 1950’s
Water color
15 x 22
Collection Edmund H. Hooker

Blue Harbor, c. 1950’s
Watercolor
22 x 30
Estate of Milton Gelman
**Turner's Grocery**, c. 1950's  
Watercolor  
20 x 25  
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

**Late Shift**, c. 1950's  
Watercolor  
22 x 30  
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

**Gloucester Winter**, c. 1950's  
Watercolor on paper  
17 ¼ x 21 ½  
Private Collection

**New England Winter**, c. 1950's  
Watercolor on paper  
22 x 30  
Private Collection

**New England Winter**, c. 1950's  
Watercolor on paper  
22 x 30  
Private Collection

**The Black Boat**, c. 1950's  
Watercolor on paper  
21 x 30  
Private Collection

**The Lord Loves Dancing**, c. 1950’s  
Watercolor  
22 x 24 ½  
Collection of Chagit and Peter Heller

**The Dead Spur**, n.d.  
Oil on canvas  
24 x 36  
Collection of The Morris Museum  
(Gift of Joseph and Barbara Montouro)
**Mining Tracks**, n.d.
Watercolor and gouache
21 ½ x 29 ½
The Morris Museum
(Gift of Joseph and Barbara Montouro)

**Provincetown Hurricane**, c. 1950’s
Oil
9 x 12
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

**Outskirts**, 1958
Oil on canvas
20 x 28
Collection of David Band

**Night Pier**, 1950’s
Oil on canvas
28 x 20
Estate of Milton Gelman

**Farm Road**, n.d.
Gouache on paper
39 x 22
Collection of The Morris Museum
(Gift of Joseph and Barbara Montouro)

**Sunday Harbor**, n.d.
Watercolor and gouache
15 ¼ x 21 ½
Collection of The Morris Museum
(Gift of Joseph and Barbara Montouro)

**Country Wash**, c. 1950’s
Watercolor
15 ½ x 22
Courtesy of Edmund H. Hooker

**Quarry Houses**, c. 1950’s
Watercolor
19 x 23 ½
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

**Abandoned Car**, c. 1950’s
Watercolor
7 ½ x 10
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

**New Boats**, c. 1950’s
Oil on canvas
20 x 28, framed 26 x 35
Estate of Milton Gelman

**Tracks to the Past**, c. 1950’s
Watercolor and gouache on paper
21 ¾ x 28 ½
Collection of The Morris Museum
(Gift of Joseph and Barbara Montouro)

**House on Owl Hill**, c. 1950’s
Oil on canvas
25 x 30
Collection of The Morris Museum
(Gift of Joseph and Barbara Montouro)
Industrial Town, c. 1960’s
Watercolor, pen and ink
19 x 22
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

House On The Hill, c. 1960
Watercolor on paper
8 x 10
Collection of David Band

New Orleans, c. 1960’s
Watercolor
21 x 15 ½
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

Storm Light, c. 1960
Watercolor on paper
8 x 10
Collection of David Band

Waterfront Tracks, c. 1970’s
Watercolor
14 x 21
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

New Orleans Art Gallery, c. 1970’s
Watercolor
15 x 21
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

December Morning, c. 1950’s
Watercolor
19 x 24
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

E. Stanley Turnbull
Portrait of Henry Gasser, c. 1935
Oil on canvas
12 x 9
Private Collection
Works from "Henry Gasser: Beyond City Limits"
Not on Exhibition at the Walsh Library Gallery

Intersection, c. 1940's
Watercolor
22 x 30
Collection of the Butler Institute

Winter Pathway, c. 1945
Watercolor on paper
15 ¼ x 22
Springfield Art Museum, Missouri

Abandoned Village, c. 1940's
Oil on canvas
25 x 30
Collection of Chagit and Peter Heller

From Hamilton Hill, c. 1940's
Watercolor on paper
22 x 30
Collection of David Crist

Conversation, 1940's
Oil
25 x 36
Estate of Milton Gelman

Winter Street, c. 1940's
Oil
20 x 28
Estate of Milton Gelman

Back Country Yard, c. 1940's
Watercolor
18 x 24
Estate of Milton Gelman

Blue Harbor, c. 1950's
Oil on canvas
24 x 30
Estate of Milton Gelman
Bermuda Vista, c. 1950's
Watercolor
16 x 23
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

The Dead Spur, n.d.
Oil on canvas
24 x 36
Collection of The Morris Museum
(Gift of Joseph and Barbara Montouro)

Provincetown Hurricane, c. 1950's
Oil
9 x 12
Collection of Edmund H. Hooker

Outskirts, 1958
Oil on canvas
20 x 28
Collection of David Band

House on Owl Hill, c. 1950's
Oil on canvas
25 x 30
Collection of The Morris Museum
(Gift of Joseph and Barbara Montouro)