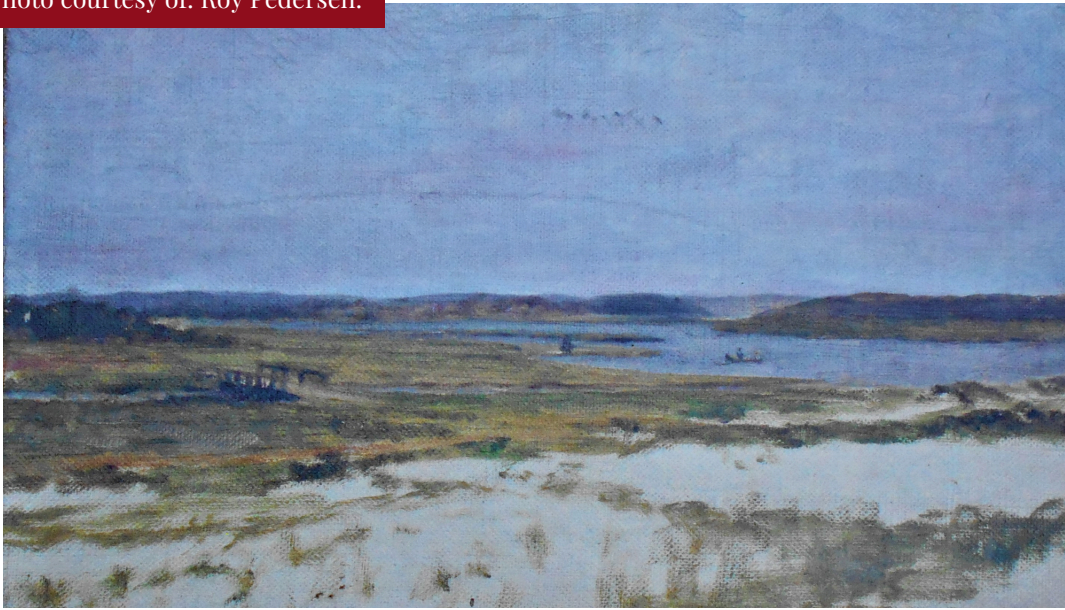


Theodore Robinson painting.  
Photo courtesy of: Roy Pedersen.



organized by his students and friends. This coincides with the appearance of Japanese composition in his art. Robinson had newly acquired an interest in Japanese prints. He described in a letter written from the shore in October 1894 to Claude Monet that he had begun to collect them. It was Japanese prints which

# Impressionist Artist Theodore Robinson

By Roy Pedersen

Theodore Robinson (1852-1896) was widely recognized by his peers as the leading practitioner of impressionism, a style that by the mid-1890s had become the leading force in American art. Robinson was the closest American friend of the great French Impressionist Claude Monet.

After Robinson returned to America from France he wanted to address American subjects. He spent part of the summer of 1894 teaching a group of women students from Brooklyn at Evelyn College in Princeton. During the Labor Day holiday Robinson travelled to Point Pleasant where he met Nestor and Carrie Sanborn head of the Cedars Art Colony where he would teach a small group of students. Classes were to begin on the 7th.

On the days before Robinson spent sailing with friends on the Manasquan River. Robinson seemed happy with his pupils from Sanborn's class. The class was composed of Peck, Washburn, Franks, Terry and Stine. Robinson also enjoying a Japanese party

made Robinson acutely conscious of the decorative power of line, form and décor. This new awareness led Robinson away from western perspective towards the Japanese technique of stacked perspective.

In the prior year, Carrie Cook Sanborn (a late nineteenth-century Quaker artist and head of the Cedars Art Colony in Point Pleasant Beach) and 20 of her students arrived at the Chicago World's fair where Japan took center stage. Carrie's house in Point Pleasant contained Chinese and Japanese pieces purchased from dealers she also attended auctions and competed for examples of art and design.

Carrie Cook (Sanborn) was born in 1843. Her childhood was spent on the farm in Point Pleasant. She began her art training at the Cooper Institute in 1870. It was a happy realization when she and her husband Nestor bought a home next to the old Cook homestead in Point Pleasant known as the Manasquan Cottage.

The best known paintings by Robinson from the Jersey Shore are described as the most sophisticated. Robinson was able to merge his impressionist technique with compositional structures from Japanese prints. One of these paintings when sold at auction in 2003 achieved the price of \$2.14 million dollars!