

## K-State News

### New John Steuart Curry exhibition at Beach Museum of Art explores artist's affinity for rising sun

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**"Sunrise over Kansas" by John Steuart Curry is a mixed-media on canvas. The 1935 painting was purchased by the Beach Museum of Art, with support from the Friends of the Beach Museum of Art, in 1996 and recently underwent conservation treatment. | [Download this photo.](#) (</media/images/jun21/sunrise-over-kansas.jpg>)**

MANHATTAN — The sun is rising in a new exhibition at Kansas State University's [Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art \(https://beach.k-state.edu/\)](https://beach.k-state.edu/), which explores the sunrise motif in works by famed Regionalist painter and Kansan John Steuart Curry and marks the return of Curry's 1935 painting "Sunrise over Kansas" for public display.

"Sunrise over Kansas: John Steuart Curry" opens Tuesday, June 29, and runs through Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2022. Enjoy the exhibition virtually from June 29 at [beach.k-state.edu \(https://beach.k-state.edu/\)](https://beach.k-state.edu/) and see it in person in the Mary Holton Seaton Gallery East after the museum reopens to the public on Aug. 24.

The exhibition of Curry paintings, prints, drawings and book illustrations explores the artist's use of the sunrise as a symbol of poetic ideals, positive historical change and personal optimism. The Beach Museum purchased "Sunrise over Kansas" from the artist's second wife in 1996 with support from the [Friends of the Beach Museum of Art \(https://beach.k-state.edu/support/friends-of-the-beach/\)](https://beach.k-state.edu/support/friends-of-the-beach/).

"Because of distracting discoloration of the sun — caused by Curry's mid-1930s experiments mixing natural resins and oil-based materials — the painting has not been on display for many years," said Beach Museum curator Liz Seaton. "Art conservator Kenneth Bé of the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center in Omaha has treated the painting to help bring back a sense of its sun's intended impact."

"Sunrise over Kansas" makes apparent how Curry sought to capture the simple sunrise motif in all of its complexity, in this case using whites at the center to convey something so bright that it might hurt the eye, Seaton said. In the painting, the artist presents a broad, elevated view of the emerging light spreading across the Heart Ranch in Barber County, Kansas, with its rolling topography and red soil.

Curry eventually made the sunrise a form of self-portrait by including a drawing of it with his autograph, Seaton said.

The Beach Museum of Art is home to more than 900 works by Curry, who was born in 1897 and grew up on a farm in Jefferson County, Kansas. He continued to love and depict Kansas scenes even after he moved out of the state. Curry died in 1946 in Wisconsin.

Related to the exhibition will be the talk "Caring for Curry" by Bé at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 11, at the museum. Seaton will provide introductory remarks about the exhibition's theme. The exhibition is accompanied by a video about the materials analysis and conservation of "Sunrise over Kansas."

Check out the Beach Museum of Art's website, [beach.k-state.edu \(https://beach.k-state.edu/\)](https://beach.k-state.edu/), for the most current information on its Aug. 24 reopening. For special programming and features, visit the museum's YouTube channel at [beach.k-state.edu/videos \(https://beach.k-state.edu/videos\)](https://beach.k-state.edu/videos). For more information, call 785-532-7718 or email [beachart@k-state.edu \(mailto:beachart@k-state.edu\)](mailto:beachart@k-state.edu). The museum, 701 Beach Lane, is on the southeast corner of the K-State campus.

## Source

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## Website

[Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art \(https://beach.k-state.edu/\)](https://beach.k-state.edu/)