

Of This Place Gainesville's Permanent Art Collection

Russell Etling

The 2019 acquisition of 400 paintings by Gainesville artist Alyne Harris from the collection of the late Mr. Caspar Rappenecker, Jr. cemented the City of Gainesville's role as a formal collecting institution.

In 2019, attorney Stephen Rappenecker notified the city about a collection of Harris 'work in the estate of his late brother. Mr. Rappenecker proposed generous terms with the idea that the City of Gainesville might acquire the 400 Harris paintings. The opportunity to accession a large body of work by a nationally acclaimed Gainesville artist was an investment in the cultural history of the city for future generations.

The Harris collection complements a collection of work in the permanent collection by Gainesville artist Eddy Mumma. A gift of Mumma's work in 2016 followed the first national solo exhibit of the artist's work, presented in the Galleries of the Historic Thomas Center. The collection was expanded by the donor, Josh Feldstein, to include nearly 70 works – making it the the largest public collection of Mumma among such museums as the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the American Folk Art Museum, the Milwaukee Art Museum, the American Visionary Art Museum and others.

The serendipitous acquisition of the Harris work, together with the gift of Mumma collection, emphasized the need for formalizing the development of a permanent city collection and building a strong philosophical foundation for this long-term initiative. To that end, it is the mission of the City to assemble a collection of visual art that reflects the community's diverse identity and serves as a record of the region's artistic legacy. The stewards of this collection will strive to provide their communities with a curated cultural asset that will inspire creativity and enrich peoples 'lives now and in the future.

We are very pleased to add the paintings of Alyne Harris to the growing Of This Place city collection.

Russell Etling guides the development of a collection of art that reflects Gainesville s community and the creative contributions of its artists.