

EDWARD THORP GALLERY
Press Release

Charles W. Hutson
A Survey
February 5th through March 27th, 2010

The Edward Thorp Gallery will present *Charles W. Hutson, A Survey Exhibition*. Charles W. Hutson was a teacher, writer, and painter born in 1840 in McPhersonville, South Carolina, who died in 1936 in New Orleans. This exhibit will examine this Southern, self-taught artist who in refusing training pursued his own direction in art. Spending much of his time sketching in New Orleans and along the Mississippi coast, he developed an expressive and luminous style in pastels, watercolor and later in oils.

The son of a lawyer, Hutson had his own legal ambitions but which were thwarted by the Civil War and the ensuing political and economic climate of the South. After graduating from South Carolina College, he served as a private in the confederate army. He became a casualty in the first battle of Bull Run, in 1861 and was captured in the battle of Seven Pines in 1862. At the end of the war, he turned to academia. He taught in numerous Southern colleges for 60 years, wrote books and contributed to many periodicals. His art was influenced by his many experiences and adventures across the nineteenth century South, building on his family's long history in South Carolina.

Hutson came to art late. It wasn't until the age of 65, that he decided to focus on his artistic pursuits. He had begun sketching in pastel while teaching in Texas in 1905. However, it was not until his retirement that he became serious about painting turning to his surroundings in New Orleans for inspiration. An amateur botanist, his love of nature is apparent in his work. His professional scholarship in Greek, French, Latin, literature, history and philosophy can be seen as well in his series of paintings based on subjects from the Bible and the Classics. Critically acclaimed his work has been described as both modernist and primitive, his oeuvre is immediately engaging reflecting both his dedication and vision. Hutson had an innate sense for the rudimentary quality of line, form and color and demonstrated an uncanny facility for abstracting landscape. His work renders the atmosphere of the South with great precision, reflecting both its light and humidity.

He exhibited in local and southern art galleries, and memorial exhibitions have taken place in New York, New Orleans, Houston, Baltimore and Richmond. His works can be found in the Phillips Collection, the New Orleans Museum of Art, Mint Museum of Art, and the Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was included in "They Taught Themselves" by Sidney Janis published in 1942.