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The Phillips Collection Presents *Jennifer Bartlett: In and Out of the Garden*



Featuring works on paper and paintings from Bartlett’s acclaimed *In the Garden* series from 1980 to 1983

WASHINGTON, DC—This spring, The Phillips Collection showcases some of the most celebrated works by contemporary American artist Jennifer Bartlett (1941–2022) from her ambitious *In the Garden* series, exploring the artist’s dialogue with gardens and nature throughout her practice. Bringing together 14 paintings and works on paper made between 1980 and 1983, [*Jennifer Bartlett: In and Out of the Garden*](#) will be on view from February 10–April 30, 2024.

“The Phillips is renowned for its extensive collection of impressionist and post-impressionist paintings, and so it is especially fitting that we should present an exhibition of work by Jennifer Bartlett, who frequently referenced these historical styles in her art,” says **Vradenburg Director and CEO Jonathan P. Binstock**. “We are delighted to present this focused exhibition of Bartlett’s *In the Garden* series, which highlights the artist’s extraordinary talent and contributions as a painter and also the continuing relevance of the art historical traditions that inspired her.”

Jennifer Bartlett emerged in the mid-1970s to become one of the leading American artists of her time and was among the first female painters of her generation to be both commercially successful and critically acclaimed. In the winter of 1979–80, Bartlett stayed in the home of British novelist Piers Paul Read, a rented house with a small, run-down garden in Nice, France. Bartlett’s time there became the

inspiration for an ambitious series of almost 200 freehand drawings of the villa’s garden which she later titled *In the Garden*.

Drawing several views of the same scene, Bartlett employed numerous techniques, styles, and media, including pencil, charcoal, ink, Conté crayon, watercolor, pastel, and gouache, evoking the styles of artists throughout art history, particularly those of Van Gogh, Monet, Renoir, Bonnard, Miró, and Picasso. After returning to New York and presenting the works on paper at Paula Cooper Gallery in 1981, Bartlett embarked on a series of monumental paintings that experimented with serial perspectives and created psychologically charged re-imaginings of the garden. *In and Out of the Garden* presents a selection of these later paintings alongside drawings made in Nice.

“Bartlett’s reinvention of figurative painting in the 1970s and 80s was characterized by an unprecedented intellectual and visual acuity,” says **Klaus Ottmann, The Phillips Collection’s Chief Curator Emeritus**. “Alongside her work *Rhapsody* from 1975–76, *In the Garden* is one of Bartlett’s most important bodies of work. Bartlett continued to move emphatically from abstraction to figuration, from minimalist rigor to maximalist exuberance, and her early works mark a key point in the development of her practice.”

Jennifer Bartlett: In and Out of the Garden was originally conceived as an exhibition in 2020 that would bring together work by Jennifer Bartlett and French artist Pierre Bonnard (1867–1947) to explore the two artists’ creative dialogue with gardens and nature. The project could not be realized because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Newly conceived as a focused solo presentation, *Jennifer Bartlett: In and Out of the Garden* serves as a fertile complement to the landscape paintings that will be featured among other celebrated works in a concurrent major exhibition on Pierre Bonnard.

Co-organized by The Phillips Collection and Kimbell Art Museum, [Bonnard’s Worlds](#) is on view March 2 through June 2, 2024. Bartlett and Bonnard were avid gardeners, and gardens—especially the ones they created for themselves—had a lifelong influence on both artists’ works. Bartlett’s garden scenes drew inspiration from her stay in Nice, not far from Bonnard’s home in Le Cannet, France. Bartlett’s *In the Garden* series provides a fascinating counterpoint to works by Bonnard, two painters for whom gardens not only evoked joy but also intense feeling. These vibrant spring exhibitions provide a window into the important role of the garden as an enduring subject in contemporary art.

CATALOGUE

The catalogue for the original exhibition, [Jennifer Bartlett & Pierre Bonnard: In and Out of the Garden \(2020\)](#) published by The Phillips Collection and D. Giles Ltd., features an essay by exhibition curator Klaus Ottmann that juxtaposes Bonnard’s and Bartlett’s works.

IMAGE: Jennifer Bartlett, *In the Garden II, #1*, 1980, Oil on canvas; enamel over silkscreen grid on baked enamel steel plates; gouache on paper; enamel on glass, 60 x 175 in., Private Collection, Courtesy Locks Gallery, Philadelphia, © Jennifer Bartlett. Courtesy Locks Gallery, Philadelphia and The Jennifer Bartlett 2013 Trust.

IMAGE GALLERY

High-resolution press images are available upon request. Please contact Lauryn Cantrell, lcantrell@phillipscollection.org.

ABOUT THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION

The Phillips Collection, America’s first museum of modern art, was founded in 1921. The museum houses one of the world’s most celebrated Impressionist and American modern art collections and continues to grow its collection with important contemporary voices. Its distinctive building combines extensive new galleries with the former home of its founder, Duncan Phillips. The Phillips’s impact spreads nationally and internationally through its diverse and experimental special exhibitions and events, including its award-winning education programs for educators, students, and adults; renowned Phillips Music series; and dynamic art and wellness and Phillips after 5 events. The museum contributes to global dialogues with events like Conversations with Artists and Artists of Conscience. The Phillips Collection values its community partnership with THEARC—the museum’s satellite campus in Southeast DC. The Phillips Collection is a private, non-government museum, supported primarily by donations.

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