

**Earl Cunningham (1893 - 1977)** was born in Edgecomb, Maine near Boothbay Harbor. He was exposed at an early age to a nautical tradition centered on sailor's art and sailing ships. Leaving home at age 13, he traveled the east coast of the United States supporting himself as a tinker and seaman. On one of the voyages aboard a four-masted schooner he made his first visit to St. Augustine, Florida, where he later settled in 1949.

Earl Cunningham was more than a painter of the sea and nautical themes. Critics have called him one of the most innovative landscape painters of his generation. "Seizing upon the harsh and brilliant colors of the Florida coasts - the overpowering reds, greens, yellows and blues - he combined these with a variety of motifs, some drawn from his life, past and present, others the fanciful reflection of a restless inner vision." His use of color has been compared with that of Van Gogh, Matisse and Vlaminck - he is now being seen as an important American modernist painter.

He was a man of great spirit. No matter how difficult his personal life, his artistic life soared above the mundane. The dying coastal trade was converted to seas filled with white winged clipper ships, Spanish galleons, Seminole canoes and even the long boats of the Norsemen. He could see beauty in the world around him and though completely untrained in an academic sense, he had the native ability to express this beauty in a very accessible manner that appeals to all of us.

Since his death in 1977, Cunningham has had solo exhibitions in over thirty museums in the United States. His works are included in the collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum, Williamsburg, Virginia.

With the support of Orange County Government through its Arts & Cultural Affairs Advisory Council, the Darden Restaurant Foundation, CNL Bank, Bright House Networks, the Elizabeth Morse Genius Foundation, Lockheed Martin, the Friends of The Mennello Museum and the City of Orlando, the Smithsonian American Art museum organized "Earl Cunningham's America.

In 1998, Marilyn and Michael Mennello offered a number of Cunningham's paintings, as well as, other pieces of folk art to the city of Orlando. The city designated the Howard Phillips house, located on the shores of Lake Formosa in Loch Haven Park as the future site of The Mennello Museum of American Art. The museum opened on November 22, 1998 and has continued to support and exhibit American art in all of its many forms.

In the late summer of 2006, the exhibit opened at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, it then was shown at the American Folk Art Museum, New York City and the Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown. It has been viewed by more than 100,000 visitors at these three venues. It will be shown at The Mennello Museum of American Art from March 13 - August 2, 2009.

All of us associated with the Museum would like to take this opportunity to thank Mayor Crotty, the county commissioners, the Arts & Cultural Affairs Advisory Council members (past and present) and Terry Olson and Maritza Gonzalez for their support not only of this exhibit, but for all of their continued support of the Museum.

**Frank Holt**



#### **Location**

The Mennello Museum of American Art  
900 East Princeton Street  
Orlando, FL 32803

#### **Telephone**

Telephone: 407.246.4278  
Fax: 407.246.4329

#### **Gallery Hours**

**Tuesday - Saturday: 10:30 AM - 4:30 PM**  
**Sunday: 12:00 PM - 4:30 PM**  
**Closed major holidays**

#### **Contact**

[www.mennellomuseum.org](http://www.mennellomuseum.org)



## *Art in the Chambers*

Orange County Administration Center  
201 S. Rosalind Avenue  
Orlando, FL 32801

**Selections from the  
Mennello Museum of American Art**

**January 15 - May 18, 2009**

**Flamingo Bay**  
1960  
Oil on masonite  
18 x 23 ½ inches



**Blue Sails  
in the Wind**  
1954  
Oil on masonite  
16 ½ x 36 ½ inches



**Blue Water Bay**  
1970  
Oil on masonite  
16 x 16 inches



**Georgia Village  
North Side**  
1930  
Oil on masonite



**Dry Dock at  
Woodpecker  
Hollow**  
1970  
Oil on masonite  
18 x 28 inches

**Sunday Outing –  
Series**  
1950  
Oil on masonite  
17 ½ x 27 ½ inches



**The Apple Tree**  
1970  
Oil on masonite  
16 x 24 inches



**Everglades Winter**  
c. 1950 – 1955  
Oil on masonite  
22 x 34 inches



**Sailing Past  
Island Canal**  
1960  
Oil on masonite  
17 x 25 inches

**White Schooners a'Sea**  
c. 1965-1970  
Oil on masonite  
17 x 24 ½ inches



**Through the Porthole**  
1957  
Oil on masonite  
20 x 21 inches



**Backwoods Fish  
Camp**  
c. 1950-1955  
Oil on masonite  
20 x 33 inches

**Patched Sails – Series I**  
1950  
Oil on masonite  
17 ¼ x 25 ¼ inches



**Red Viking  
Portrait**  
c. 1938  
Oil on masonite  
15 ½ x 25 ¼ inches



**Sunrise at  
Lighthouse Point**  
1965  
Oil on masonite  
17 x 24 inches



**All in a Row –  
Series 3**  
1962  
Oil on masonite  
18 x 28 inches