

Biennial. The tall vertical forestscape, a jumble of angles and lines, was abstracted from the Tillamook Burn, whose devastation logger-turned-conservation writer Stewart Holbrook had declared a fit subject for Oregon artists.

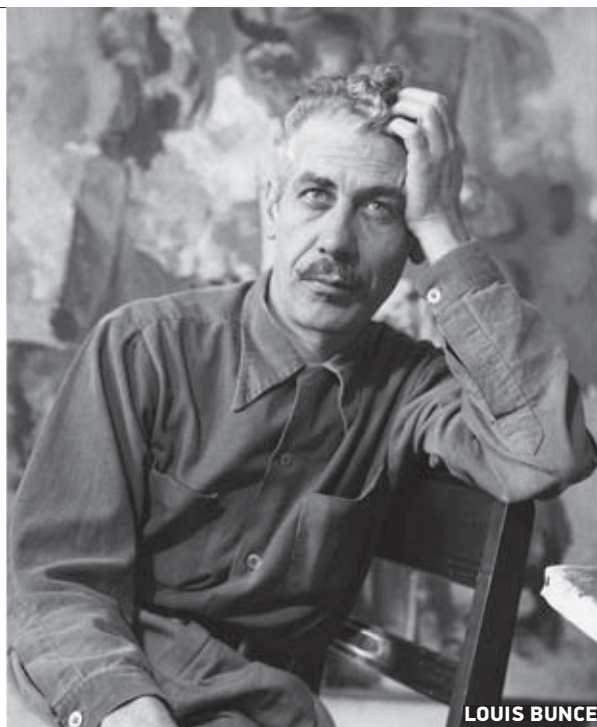
*Art News* critic Henry McBride wrote that Bunce's painting was one of just nine in the biennial that "jolted me out of my complacency"; one of the other eight paintings on his list was by Pollock. In 1957, another of Bunce's paintings was given a full-page reproduction in a *Life* magazine story on four western painters.

As the decade closed, Bunce was commissioned by the Port of Portland to create a mural for the new Portland International Airport terminal.

His design for the 11-by-20-foot abstract mural plunged Bunce into the center of a seething national controversy over the value of non-representational art — a harbinger of the culture wars we're still fighting in America today. "People want cows, or horses, or timber, or mountains, or airplanes — something they can recognize," a port commissioner complained.

The mural — represented in the Hallie Ford show by a large preliminary oil study — so enraged cultural conservatives that Bunce received death threats. He had garbage dumped on his lawn, and was under police guard. After months of controversy *The Oregonian* newspaper announced it would run no more letters to the editor on the subject.

"There are some things, such as Elvis Presley, Limburger cheese and the sack dress, of which readers either approve or



LOUIS BUNCE

disapprove," the paper wrote. "There is no middle ground, no basis for compromise, and no hope that the most forceful arguments put forth by believers will persuade nonbelievers. In this category we would place the question of abstract art."

But the port eventually accepted Bunce's design, and the mural can still be seen at the airport today.

The final years of Bunce's career saw him explore a variety of art forms. Some of the paintings from the late 1960s and into the '70s are clearly influenced by Pop Art; others express more explicitly than ever before the deep sexuality that underscores much of his work.

In 1966, at the age of 58, Bunce married his third wife, an 18-year-old art student named Gloria Scott. The two of them partnered with another woman, Sally Judd, to open the Sally Judd Gallery in Portland, showing contemporary West Coast art. (Scott divorced Bunce five years later and would go on to marry California painter and sculptor Roy De Forest, still known nationally for his quirky dog paintings.)

Bunce may have enjoyed his life in the fast lane, but he never let it interfere with his art.

"Louie was a firm believer in work," curator Hull says. "He was a lover of social life, of women, of drinking, of hanging out in bars. But he was in the studio every day."

On June 11, 1983, Bunce died of an aneurysm at his studio in southeast Portland after a day spent talking to a friend about his work.

For lovers of Northwest painting, the Hallie Ford show is a must-see. It's well presented, thoughtful and sharply focused on the development of Bunce's vision, locating the artist clearly in the sweep of 20th century art history.

*Louis Bunce: Dialogue with Modernism runs through March 26 at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, 700 State Street, Salem. Open 10 am to 5 pm Tuesday-Saturday and 1 to 5 pm Sunday. \$6, \$4 for seniors and \$3 for students 18 and older. More at willamette.edu/go/hfma.*



UNTITLED MURAL STUDY BY BUNCE

## MORE WAYS TO EXPLORE THE ART OF LOUIS BUNCE

Eugene's Karin Clarke Gallery is hosting a small exhibit of work by Louis Bunce through Feb. 25 in conjunction with the big retrospective exhibit *Louis Bunce: Dialogue with Modernism* at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art in Salem.

*Louis Bunce (1907 to 1983): Selected Works* includes 15 pieces by Bunce, mostly paintings on paper, and spans much of the artist's working career. The paintings are being shown here by arrangement with Portland's Russo Lee Gallery, which represents the Bunce estate.

The Karin Clarke Gallery is open noon to 5:30 pm Wednesday through Saturday at 760 Willamette Street. Free.

Two free events about the exhibit will be held this month and next at the Hallie Ford:

At 2 pm Sunday, Feb. 26, artists George Johanson, Lucinda Parker and Jack Portland will

join Portland philanthropist and former gallerist Arlene Schnitzer to talk about "Remembering Louis Bunce" at the Paulus Lecture Hall at Willamette University College of Law.

And 2 pm Sunday, March 26, Roger Hull will give a gallery talk about the retrospective at the museum.

Finally, the exhibition is accompanied by a 192-page monograph — much more than a simple exhibition catalog — written by Hull about Bunce's life and work, with color illustrations. It's the latest in a series of books published by the museum, most of them by Hull, and most on Northwest artists from Charles Heaney to Nelson Sandgren. The monographs constitute the best library about Northwest art available. The hardcover book is \$39.95 at the Hallie Ford Museum. — Bob Kiefer

# House of Records

**EUGENE'S RECORD STORE SINCE 1971**  
258 East 13th, Eugene • 541.342.7975

## Luckeys CLUB 100 YEARS

10PM FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17 (\$15)  
SHAM 69, GALLOWS BOUND, CREEPSHOW

10PM SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18 (\$5)  
JARON, THE ATHIARCHISTS, DICK DAGGER

933 Olive St | 541-687-4643

[luckeysclub.com](http://luckeysclub.com) • In the heart of the Barmuda Triangle

## Starlight LOUNGE

BEST HAPPY HOUR!  
EW "BEST OF EUGENE 2007-15"

830 Olive St | 541-343-3204

## 2017 EUGENE RECORD SHOW

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26 | 10AM - 5PM

Zillions of used & new records, 45s, CDs, Tapes & Other musical rarities spanning all genres, eras & obsessions

EUGENE HILTON, 66 E. 6TH AVE, EUGENE

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

\$3 GENERAL ENTRY | \$15 EARLY ENTRY (7AM-10AM)