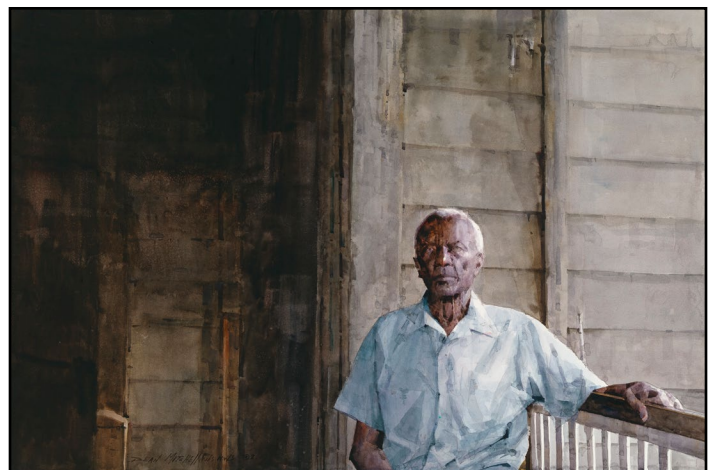


# Dean Mitchell & Andrew Wyeth

## A Shared Vision



Discover the “through line” connecting one of America’s greatest painters with one of today’s masters.



**Dean Mitchell (b. 1957)** is an acclaimed American painter, celebrated for his mastery of watercolor as well as his work in oil and egg tempera. Raised in Florida, Mitchell draws deeply from personal experience, often portraying themes of heritage, resilience, and dignity. His subjects range from intimate portraits to evocative rural and urban landscapes, each marked by quiet emotional power. Recognized with over 600 awards, including the American Watercolor Society's Gold Medal of Honor a record four times, Mitchell is considered one of today's leading voices in contemporary American realism.



**Andrew Wyeth (1917–2009)** was one of the most influential American painters of the 20th century, renowned for his precise realism and deeply personal vision of rural life. Working primarily in tempera and watercolor, Wyeth captured the landscapes and people of his native Pennsylvania and coastal Maine with a haunting intimacy. His works, such as *Christina's World*, are celebrated for their quiet intensity, emotional depth, and stark beauty. Honored throughout his lifetime and collected internationally, Wyeth's legacy endures as a cornerstone of American art.

# Insights from Artist Matthew J. Cutter



*As gallery owners, it's fun to seek out comparisons of similarities and differences among the artists we represent, as well as historical artists. We often find that there is a "through line" of commonality over the generations of creative people. As an artist myself, I have noticed there is a language to art, a grab bag of tools available to us all, but how we use and arrange them is what ultimately defines our style. Today I want to offer some similarities between Dean Mitchell, an artist we represent, and Andrew Wyeth, one of the great American painters of the 20th century.*

*Ultimately, they each have their own unique voice to what they do, but what I find most similar is their desire to convey "Americana" seen through their individual eyes. They both seek to represent people and places that are intimate and close to them. As a young artist, Dean Mitchell received a letter from Andrew Wyeth, complimenting him on his uniqueness as an artist. This was a very unselfish act, and one that demonstrates a high level of appreciation for another artist's efforts.*

*I have selected three paintings from each artist and would like to share my thoughts... Matt Cutter*

\*All Commentary by Matthew J. Cutter — an award-winning artist and gallery co-owner. His dual role as creator and curator offers a rare perspective on the connections between Dean Mitchell and Andrew Wyeth.



## *Drama in Light and Dark*

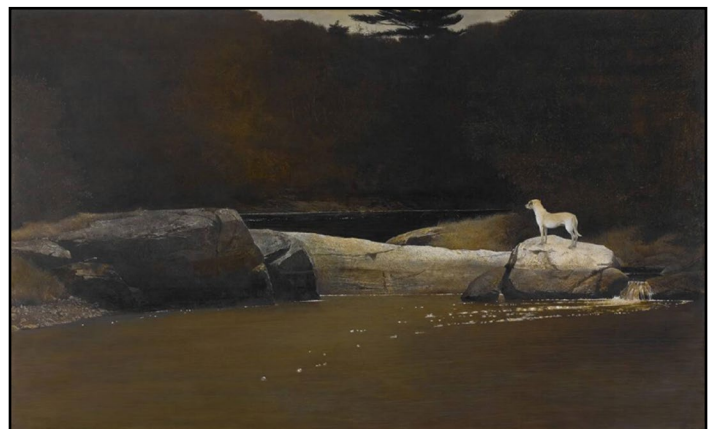


Barn Structures by Dean Mitchell  
Acrylic on Board  
18" x 24"  
Available  
CALL (904) 810-0460



The Intruder by Andrew Wyeth  
Tempera on Panel, c.1971  
30.5" x 50.3"  
Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art,  
Bentonville, Arkansas

Looking at these two paintings, I'm struck by the compositional use of the rich darks to create drama and a place for the eye to go. With Mitchell's paintings, he uses the darks in the foreground to emphasize the dramatic light on the buildings on the upper horizon. Wyeth does the same with the dramatic light on the dog and rocks. The lack of saturated color in both paintings departs from nature, but the exchange is worth it, as the extreme contrast tells a story.



Note the similarity of the light, dark pattern when Barn Structures is flipped upside down.

## *Balancing Light and Mystery*



I am Joseph Northern by Dean Mitchell  
Watercolor on Paper  
20" x 30"  
Private Collection



Peasant Dress by Andrew Wyeth  
Watercolor & Pencil on Paper, c.1972  
19.8" x 20.8"  
Private Collection

For me, great artwork must possess a quality that draws the viewer into the composition. This can be done in many ways. With Mitchell's painting, the figure of Mr. Northern very stoically looks out toward the viewer. His posture is relaxed and he seems comfortable with his left arm draped over the railing. There is a mystery to this piece as we are invited to imagine what he is thinking. Mitchell does not show us every detail, but rather allows the left side of the composition to fall into shadow. This is a perfect balance to the right side, as it is in light and gives contrast to the figure. The shirt appears to have a blue/gray hint, providing a very reserved color to a painting, dominated by the warm earth tones.

In *Peasant Dress*, Wyeth employs a similar design strategy, with the figure in sunlight, set off by a dark and mysterious background. He also lightens the opposing side of the painting to add balance and intrigue. Like Mitchell, he doesn't get caught up in too many details, but rather suggests them, and ultimately uses broad strokes of paint to lay down his design. Both artists were intimately familiar with their models, and I think it really comes through in their works. Dean has painted Joseph Northern on numerous occasions, and Wyeth painted Helga Testorf around 260 times!



## Design Anchors



Heartland Barn by Dean Mitchell  
Watercolor on Paper  
22" x 30"  
Available - CALL (904) 810-0460



Study for Slight Breeze by Andrew Wyeth  
Watercolor on Paper, c.1968  
21.8" x 29"  
Wyeth Foundation for American Art

There are so many things to say about these two masterpieces, but I am going to focus on big shapes, points of interest and reservation of color. Both paintings are anchored by large buildings on the right side of the composition. This is the anchor for both designs, as it sets the backdrop for some key elements to step forward.

In "Slight Breeze" by Wyeth, the bell mounted to the posts in the ground is the center of interest and the house serves as the backdrop. I love how the title "Slight Breeze" helps to imply movement, and a moving bell produces a sound. It makes the painting interactive with the viewer. The final comparison I want to point out is the reservation of color. Both artists set a color harmony that focuses on subtle grays and earth tones. This allows for design and composition to do the heavy lifting to convey their messages.



*In Dean's painting, the white barn in sunlight is the star of the show, but the dark vertical post helps to "frame" the barn and acts to separate it from the pale sky. In my opinion, this design choice is both daring and necessary to maximize focus on the structure.*

## *Andrew Wyeth's Words to Dean Mitchell*



Artist Dean Mitchell often speaks of the influences that shaped his career, but few stories carry as much weight as the letter he received from the legendary Andrew Wyeth. In that personal note, Wyeth acknowledged Mitchell's talent with rare sincerity—an affirmation from one of America's most revered painters. For Mitchell, the letter was not only an encouragement, but also a reminder that his voice as an artist mattered. Today, he shares this story as both a deeply personal milestone and a testament to the power of artistic kinship across generations.



Among the over 600 awards Dean Mitchell has received perhaps one of the most significant is the AWS Gold Medal of Honor... Dean has earned the American Watercolor Society's prestigious Gold Medal of Honor four times—a feat unmatched in the history of the Society. This extraordinary accomplishment places him in the company of legendary past winners such as Andrew Wyeth (1-time recipient), Edward H. Potthast (2-time recipient), Childe Hassam (2-time recipient), Hilda Belcher (2-time recipient), and Donald Teague (2-time recipient). Mitchell's record not only underscores his mastery of the medium, but also secures his place among the greatest watercolorists of all time.

### **Dean's AWS Gold Medal of Honor Award Winning Paintings**

- 1998 - Rowena's Last Visit
- 2015 - The Artist Bob Ragland
- 2021 - Melanie
- 2025 - Tampa Bay Drawbridge

*We hope this Commentary has offered you a fresh perspective on two extraordinary artists and the ways their visions intersect. Later this fall, Dean Mitchell's newest works will be unveiled at our gallery, marking an important moment in his ongoing journey. Please feel free to contact us for details on available works or personalized guidance in adding a Mitchell to your collection.*