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Bayard Wootten

Light and Air:

*Photographs of Tryon,
Western North Carolina,
and Beyond*

August 24 to October 18, 2024

*Featuring the largest-ever gathering of Wootten's
work, including many never-before-seen images.*

41 archival pigment prints made from digitizing
the original 5"x7" and 8"x10" negatives in the
Mary Bayard Morgan Wootten
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TRYON arts & CRAFTS SCHOOL

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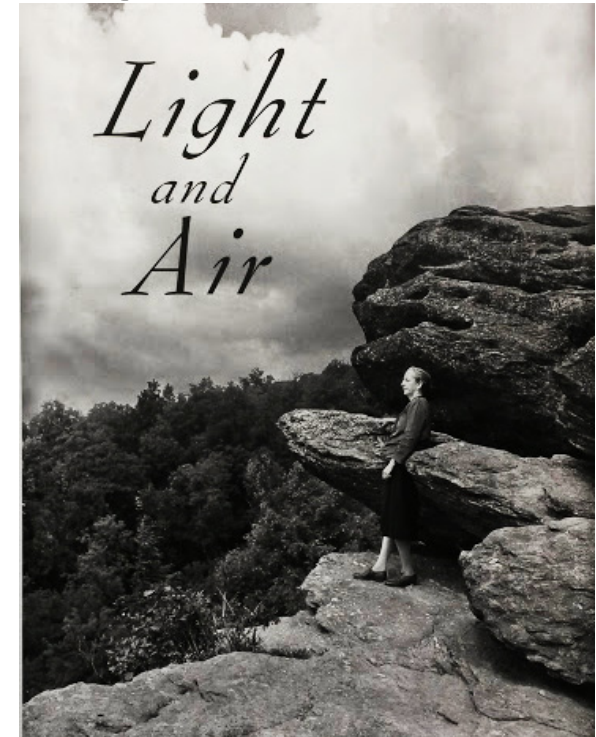
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August 23, 2024, Reception Pamphlet Edition

TRYON arts & CRAFTS SCHOOL

Presents

Bayard Wootten



*Photographs of Tryon,
Western North Carolina,
and Beyond*

Curated by Lili Corbus, PhD, and Will Barclift

Exhibition Runtime;
August 24 - October 18, 2024

“One of North Carolina’s most remarkable photographers”

Bayard Wootten (1875-1959) is celebrated as one of North Carolina’s most remarkable, versatile, and productive photographers. Her compelling images of our region’s past, as well as a few other locales, will be on display at Tryon Arts and Crafts School from August 24 to October 18.

The photographs presented consist of archival pigment prints made from digitizing the original 5”x7” and 8”x10” negatives in the Mary Bayard Morgan Wootten Photographic Collection in the North Carolina Photographic Archives at UNC, Chapel Hill. The images were chosen from among two earlier Wootten exhibits, *Light and Air* and *The Joy is in the Going*, as well as newly printed work, much of it never exhibited before. In fact, this show, curated by Lili Corbus, art historian and TACS board member, and Will Barclift, Director of TACS, with the help of UNC archivist Stephen Fletcher, will constitute the largest-ever gathering of her work to be exhibited.

Wootten’s photographic contributions are significant. Never afraid of adventure, she is considered the first woman aerial photographer, designed the first trademarked Pepsi-Cola logo, and was a member of the NC National Guard. She reached a level of professionalism few in her era achieved. She supported her two sons and family by

maintaining successful studios from the early 1900s through 1954 when she retired, making “my Old North State” her field of work. Her collection includes a wide variety of subjects and genres, including portraits, postcards, street scenes, architecture, gardens, and landscapes.

Wootten first visited the western mountains when she accepted her cousin Lucy Morgan’s offer to make promotional photos of the Penland School of Craft that Morgan founded in 1929. Some of these Penland photos of the school will be featured in this exhibition.



Penland Weavers: Lucy and Mrs. Hoppis, circa 1932

Wootten returned to the mountains often and photos from her jaunts in Appalachian communities were published in classic books including *Backwoods America* (1934), *Cabins in the Laurel* (1935), and *From My Highest Hill: Carolina Mountain Folks* (1941). She also visited Tryon in the 1930s, at least twice, staying with her friends George and Sally Cathey, owners of the Blue Ridge Weavers. While here, she photographed many

landscapes and people, including Tryon toymakers, basket weavers, farmers, country roads, waterfalls, mountain vistas, and more. Most of the images in this show will be of our local region. Some places and faces may be hard to identify from our current perspective, some 90 years later, so it will be interesting to learn if any viewers recognize these scenes from our past.



Toymaker [Pauline Miller Cowan], Tryon, NC, 1930s

Article by Lili Corbus, PhD

We invite you to explore Wootten's legacy through these evocative images that capture the essence of our region's history. Each photograph tells a story, offering a glimpse into the everyday lives, landscapes, and people of a bygone era. As we admire Wootten's work, we are reminded of the importance of preserving our cultural heritage. Stay tuned for future lectures by Stephen Fletcher and Dr. Lili Corbus, which will offer deeper insights into Wootten’s photography and the role of women in shaping the artistic narrative of the early 20th century.