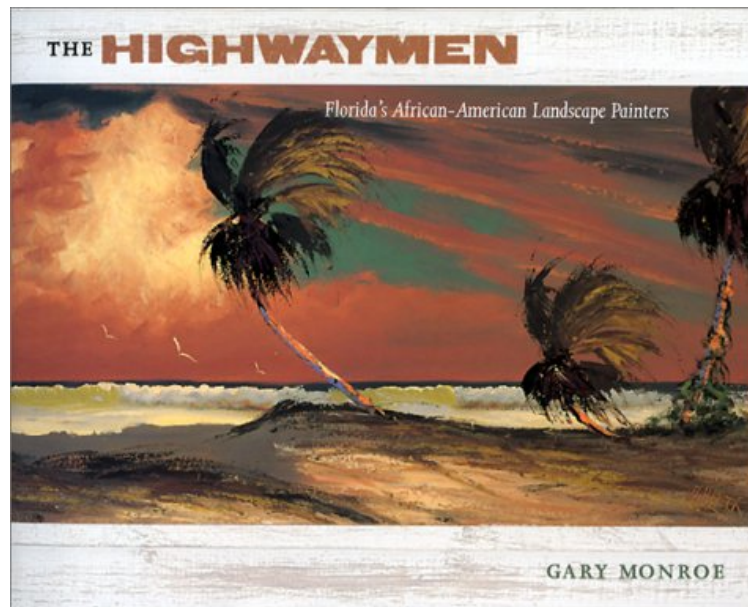


## The Highwaymen: Florida's African-American Landscape Painters

Gary Monroe

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**Gary Monroe : The Highwaymen: Florida's African-American Landscape Painters** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Highwaymen: Florida's African-American Landscape Painters:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good book with great sample pictures of the artist workBy BiggsieGood book with great sample pictures of the artist work. It was exactly what I was looking for in relation to The Highway Men artist.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. finally, a complete history of these Black artists who ...By Paulafinally, a complete history of these Black artists who could not get an exhibition at a gallery. the landscapes are stunning. i bought two of these.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Gorgeous bookBy Portland, OR userThis is a beautiful book of gorgeous artwork and good biographies about the painters.

"For the first time, the real story behind the Highwaymen has emerged . . . a well-researched, lively, and comprehensive overview of the development and contribution of these African-American artists and their place in the history of Florida's popular culture."--Mallory McCane O'Connor, author of Lost Cities of the Ancient SoutheastThe Highwaymen introduces a group of young black artists who painted their way out of the despair awaiting them in citrus groves and packing houses of 1950s Florida. As their story recaptures the imagination of Floridians and their paintings fetch ever-escalating prices, the legacy of their freshly conceived landscapes exerts a new and powerful influence on the popular conception of the Sunshine State.While the value of Highwaymen paintings has soared in recent years, until now no authoritative account of the lives and work of these black Florida artists has existed. Emerging in the late 1950s, the Highwaymen created idyllic, quickly realized images of the Florida dream and peddled some 100,000 of them from the trunks of their cars. Working with inexpensive materials, the Highwaymen produced an astonishing number of landscapes that depict a romanticized Florida--a faraway place of wind-swept palm trees, billowing cumulus clouds, wetlands, lakes, rivers, ocean, and setting sun. With paintings still wet, they loaded their

cars and traveled the state's east coast, selling the images door-to-door and store-to-store, in restaurants, offices, courthouses, and bank lobbies. Sometimes characterized as motel art, the work is a hybrid form of landscape painting, corrupting the classically influenced ideals of the Highwaymen's white mentor, A. E. "Bean" Backus. At first, the paintings sold like boom-time real estate. In succeeding decades, however, they were consigned to attics and garage sales. Rediscovered in the mid-1990s, today they are recognized as the work of American folk artists. Gary Monroe tells the story behind the Highwaymen, a loose association of 25 men and 1 woman from the Ft. Pierce area--a fascinating mixture of individual talent, collective enterprise, and cultural heritage. He also offers a critical look at the paintings and the movement's development. Added to this are personal reminiscences by some of the artists, along with a gallery of 63 full-color reproductions of their paintings.

"Monroe's book is a valuable document of Florida's rich cultural past, showing how black artists contributed to the dreamy visions of Florida." About the Author Gary Monroe, professor of visual art at Daytona State College, is a documentary photographer with a long-time interest in "outsider" and vernacular art. His work has been recognized with numerous exhibitions and awards, including grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Fulbright Foundation, and he has been a popular lecturer for the Florida Humanities Council's Speakers Bureau. His photographs have been published in *Cassadaga: The South's Oldest Spiritualist Community* (UPF, 2000), which he coedited; *Life in South Beach* (1989); and *Florida Dreams* (1993). He lives in DeLand, Florida.