



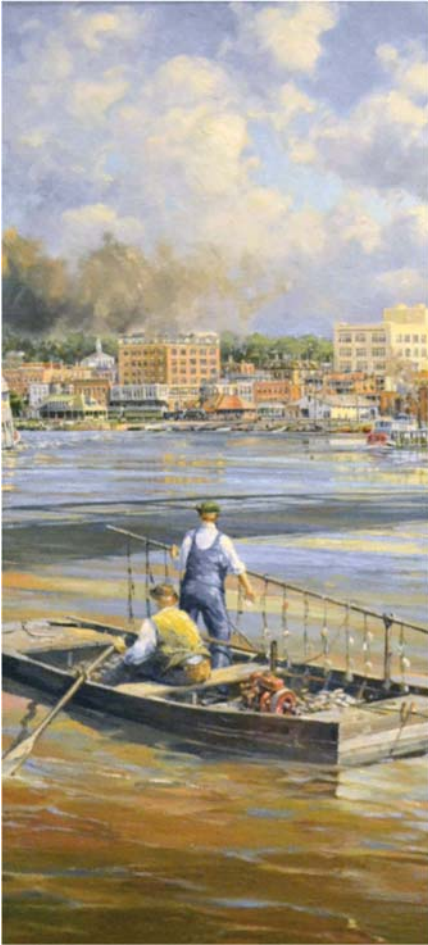
*City of Muscatine, 1919*

**Michael Blaser**

Oil on canvas, 2002

Commissioned by and gifted to the Muscatine Art Center by Jeff and Jill Fick

## City of Muscatine, 1919



### Michael Blaser (1947- )

Born in Davenport and raised in Moline, Michael Blaser is fascinated by great rivers and boats. While attending St. Ambrose, he studied under Father Edward Catich. Blaser then enlisted in the Marines during the Vietnam War. Following his military service, he became an apprentice at an art studio in Chicago. Blaser was an art director at Deere & Co. and an illustrator for *Sail* and *Cruising World* magazines. Today, from his own studio, Blaser completes commissioned paintings.

*City of Muscatine, 1919* looks back to the period when Muscatine was the “Pearl Button Capitol of the World.” The painting shows clammers using a crowfoot bar, the old Muscatine High Bridge and the steamboat *Capitol*. A Muscatine couple commissioned Blaser to paint the scene and then gifted the finished painting to the Muscatine Art Center.

### Collection Connection

The Muscatine Art Center’s Mississippi River Collection contains many maps and bird’s eye views of communities along the Mississippi River. Some maps in this collection date back to the late 1600s and early 1700s. Many objects in the collection are from the 1800s, a period when Mississippi River towns and villages were rapidly growing.

By the time Charles Shober & Company published its 1875 *Bird’s Eye View of the City of Muscatine*, the population of Muscatine was over 7,000 with Muscatine County having over 21,000 residents.

The growth of Muscatine and many other communities is well documented with the Mississippi River Collection.

Charles Shober & Co.; Alfred Theodore Andreas  
*Bird’s Eye View of the City of Muscatine, Muscatine County, Iowa*  
Hand-colored lithograph, 1875  
Gift of Mrs. Jerome C. (Marianna) Bishop

