



## THE NEW YORKER

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### **CHARLES BURCHFIELD**

The evolution of Burchfield's early watercolors is a bit like "The Wizard of Oz" in reverse. In 1918, the American painter abruptly traded in his fanciful, colorful landscapes (to which he eventually returned) for a stark, wren-colored realism, influenced by the writing of Sherwood Anderson, Sinclair Lewis, and Willa Cather. Burchfield's unpopulated scenes of buildings in rural and small-town America retain the uncanny air of his earlier landscapes. In "Houses in the Snow" (circa 1920), a trio of pitched-roof structures, two huddled close in the snowdrifts, as if trying to keep warm, have an unsettling anthropomorphic air—windows are unblinking eyes and porches gape like mouths. The sagging roof of another ramshackle home, this one accompanied by a single bare-branched tree, looks as lonely as the woman in Hopper's *Automat*. Through April 25. (DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 212-247-2111.)