

Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide

a journal of nineteenth-century visual culture

Will South

Response: Reply to George Dimock and Naurice Frank Woods' "Affirming Blackness: A Rebuttal to Will South's 'A Missing Question Mark: The Unknown Henry Ossawa Tanner'"

Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide 10, no. 1 (Spring 2011)

Citation: Will South, "Response: Reply to George Dimock and Naurice Frank Woods' 'Affirming Blackness: A Rebuttal to Will South's 'A Missing Question Mark: The Unknown Henry Ossawa Tanner'" ; *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 10, no. 1 (Spring 2011), <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/spring11/reply-to-george-dimock-and-naurice-frank-woods-by-will-south>.

Published by: [Association of Historians of Nineteenth-Century Art](#)

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Response: Reply to George Dimock and Naurice Frank Woods'
"Affirming Blackness: A Rebuttal to Will South's 'A Missing
Question Mark: The Unknown Henry Ossawa Tanner'"
by Will South

Frank Woods and George Dimock have written a thoughtful, if emotional, [response](#) to my article, "[A Missing Question Mark: The Unknown Henry Ossawa Tanner](#)." In an essay containing certain useful ideas, the claim put forward by Woods and Dimock that my work seeks to diminish Tanner is perhaps the most regrettable among a number of unwarranted conclusions that they draw. The disciplined study of a major figure such as Tanner is a path toward the expansion of knowledge and meaning, a pursuit that diminishes no one. As Tanner studies advance, we may legitimately have alternative interpretations that compete and move dialogue forward. Henry Ossawa Tanner will remain compelling for the art that he made and the life that he lived, and it is our duty as scholars to illuminate each, however difficult that task may sometimes be.

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