Reynold Weidenaar (1915-1985) painted a watercolor that is located in the Art and Music room at the library. It is a great example of being flexible in art because he did more prints than he did watercolor paintings. Together his subject and technique makes a dramatic picture that works good with the surrounding picture in the Art and Music Room. Art and music blend so beautifully and this is a good contrast to the blend. I think this piece fights which makes it a good new emotion to add to a peaceful room.

The subject of the painting is in a forest that looks to have recently received some rain. The forest must also get hit with some bad weather because the tree in it looks like it has been damaged from lightning a couple years ago and is now decaying. The painting looks like it would have taken place at sunrise or sunset because of the colors in the sky. There are darker colors towards the ground and just before the paper ends at the top, so it is hard to say which one it would be. I think that this picture was made in early fall. The weather is getting colder so the man dresses warm clothing but the leaves on the tree haven’t started to change color or fall.

The painting displays a huge broken down tree in a woods, which is the main focus of the painting. I think the focal point is a big twisted trunk in the middle of the landscape that is angled towards the right. This part of the tree has the most amount of light on it and its angle is very dramatic. Around the main trunk are two other large trunks that are connected to it. The branches that protrude out of the trunks spill all over the painting, hitting the ground and going off the paper. Blur’s of green are the presence of leaves dangling off the branches. The grass is a mixture of greens, browns, and yellow which makes the ground look muddy. There is also some plant life on
the ground sporadically placed around the tree, and mixed in with the muddy grass. They could be dead flowers because they have long stems with some dark globs of paint on top. On the left side of the tree is a man facing into the picture. He looks to have a gun in his hand but he has no camouflage on. The clothing he is wearing looks more like fishing because he has on a white hat, blue coat, red pants, and a pair of boots. In the background of the picture, there is a breathtaking sky. At the bottom of the sky there is a muddy color that ascends into beautiful yellows, oranges, and at the top there are pinks. There is a streak of green on the right side of the sky that bleeds from on of the leaves down to the ground.

The application of the media is different on certain areas of the painting. Watercolor does use water to make it transparent but some areas of the painting are dramatically different in the technique that is used to apply it. The tree and some of the leaves have crisp edges and the colors are placed directly onto dry paper. The artist did use some water on areas of the tree to make the browns softer and more transparent but for the most of it he applied it to a dry area. The areas sky and ground look like they were wet paper before he added the color. The colors bleed together and blend so nicely that I think it was a wet application.

As I looked at this painting, I began to compare sizes of objects and thought about the situations that each object was in. I compared the size of nature in the picture and the size of the man. The man looked so small compared to the objects around him, even the dead flowers seem very tall compared to the man. It looked like nature was intimidating with the dark muddy colors and the relative size of all the objects. I started thinking about how the man fitted into all of it. He definitely looked out of place with this bright clothing and then I thought about the shotgun in his hands. From my perception, this piece of work displayed the act of man verses nature. The
small man was hunting for things to kill in nature while walking in nature. I think that the picture is portraying that nature is bigger than man. The view of nature in this piece is a big presence because of the tree and all of its branches that trap and entangle. Everything is gloomy except the sky. The sky has colors that appear from behind the tree and lighten up the entire piece. I think the sky is supposed to represent hope or lead the dumb hunter “towards the light” and get him lost.

Even if Reynold Weidenaar was only painting this landscape as what he saw, I think he realized the power of nature and its presence in the forest. I think it takes paintings like this to make us realize how strong nature is. I was drawn to this piece because it reminded me of the destruction nature is causing in the south. I think it is a good representation of the struggle between man and nature. I think the beauty that draws us to nature is going to be what saves it in the end.