

Biggs Museum of American Art

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Currier and Ives Exhibition Comes to the Biggs *Opens July 4th*

Dover, DE (June 10, 2013) – The Biggs Museum of American Art is pleased to announce that Currier and Ives: Legacy of the American Spirit Exhibition will open at the Museum on July 4, 2013 in conjunction with the downtown Dover fourth of July celebrations. The Biggs Museum will extend its hours and stay open until 9 P.M. so that visitors can stop by the exhibition up until the fireworks begin. Visitors of the exhibition are also encouraged to stop into Child HELP studio and make their own American flags to celebrate American's independence.

"Currier and Ives prints depict some of America's favorite pastimes which is why an opening on Independence Day is a perfect fit," shared Ryan Grover, Curator at the Biggs Museum of American Art. "This exhibition will entertain audiences of all ages and we encourage families in the area to take advantage of this opportunity to see these renowned prints that tell important stories about America's rich history."

About Currier and Ives

When Nathaniel Currier, a young businessman in New York City, published a lithograph in 1835 showing Planters Hotel in New Orleans after a fire, it ushered in a new era of pictorial journalism. The print established the firm which was to achieve its greatest fame as "Currier & Ives" after 1857 when James Merritt Ives became a partner. Over the next seven decades, the firm consistently provided the public with images that recorded the breaking news of the day. However, as the demand for decorative lithographs increased, Currier & Ives also published prints depicting almost every aspect of American life. Through an ever-expanding repertoire of images, the prints of Currier & Ives celebrated the activities, events and everyday life of nineteenth century Americans. Images included domestic life, historical events, city and country views, religious scenes, scenic wonders, westward expansion, trains, ships, winter scenes and hunting and

fishing. Each print was titled and most were hand-colored by women who worked for the firm.

The prints were sold in the New York City shop, distributed through mail-order, and were offered by peddlers and by agents working throughout the United States and Europe. Working with speed and efficiency, Currier & Ives printed two to three images every week for 64 years, and the firm is believed to have produced more than 8,000 different titled lithographic prints. Many of the images serve to document a wide variety of social trends and attitudes that reflect American culture during the nineteenth century. The Legacy of Currier & Ives allows visitors to experience American history and society through the extraordinary images produced by the legendary firm who called themselves "Printmakers to the People."

The Biggs Museum of American Art will host a series of programming in conjunction with this iconic exhibition.

Event Quick Facts

Opening of "The Legacy of Currier & Ives: Shaping the American Spirit"

Thursday, July 4

9:00am to 9:00pm | Free

Celebrate America's independence by previewing the Currier and Ives exhibition. Bring the family to create flags to wave during the fireworks.

Biggs Kids: Printmaking with bubble wrap

Saturday, July 6

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Free, Children Ages 5-10

Let's learn about the prints featured in the Currier and Ives exhibition. Using a material that you wouldn't commonly think of as an art supply, we'll create prints using bubble wrap.

Mini-Masters: Printmaking with bubble wrap

Wednesday, July 10

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Free, Children Ages 3-5

Let's learn about the prints featured in the Currier and Ives exhibition. Using a material that you wouldn't commonly think of as an art supply, we'll create prints using bubble wrap.

History, Evolution & Impact of Political Cartoons

Saturday, July 13

4:00 to 5:00pm | Free

Rob Tornoe's political cartoons appear in the Dover Post, the News Journal, the New York Times, the Washington Post, and on WHYY, MSNBC, ESPN and NBC's "Meet the Press." Tornoe's lecture will focus on the history, evolution, and impact of political cartoons in America as well as discuss the main elements of political cartoons that help viewers understand the meaning behind them, including inspiration, symbols and allusions. While many of the images produced by Currier & Ives reflect the social trends and attitudes American culture during the nineteenth Century, political cartoons found in the same newspapers would make a much bolder statement.

Member Event: More than Nostalgia: The Surprise of Currier & Ives

Sunday, July 21

1:30 to 3:30pm

Free for members

\$30 for not-yet-members

Although today's audiences associate Currier & Ives prints with scenes that include sleigh rides to grandmother's house, portraits of historical figures, and the heroic acts of firemen, not all of the prints produced by the firm were flattering portrayals of country scenes or American heroes. A number of Currier & Ives prints illustrate how American attitudes about race, class and gender evolved over the nineteenth century. Viewed within a larger framework, these lesser-known prints are a window into the past. Julia Courtney, Curator of Art for the Springfield Museum of Fine Arts in Springfield, MA, which is home to the country's only permanent museum gallery devoted to the works of Currier & Ives, will discuss the exhibit The Legacy of Currier & Ives and surprising revelations that reach beyond bucolic images that were produced during the 73 years the firm was in operation.

The Message is the Medium: The Changing Landscape of Public Storytelling

Saturday, August 3

1:00 to 2:00pm | Free

A lecture with Dave Burris, president of Burris Digital, a digital media firm, and co-founder and publisher of MilfordLIVE.com, an online news website serving Milford, DE, will address social media, political blogging and the ever-changing landscape of the media. Currier & Ives belonged to the era of traditional mass media when newspaper production was based on a group of small, centrally located reporters, editors and illustrators. The paper was sent from one source and received by a large audience elsewhere. The digital age of mass media which was introduced and perpetuated by the internet increased the convenience of distribution by providing audiences with the ability to access news at their leisure with computers and smartphones.

Biggs Kids: Clay Prints

Saturday, August 3

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Free, Children Ages 5-10

Let's learn about the prints featured in the Currier and Ives exhibition. We'll talk about negative and positive space, and then we'll create our own prints using clay and paints.

Mini-Masters: Clay Prints

Wednesday, August 7

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Free, Children Ages 3-5

Let's learn about the prints featured in the Currier and Ives exhibition. We'll talk about negative and positive space, and then we'll create our own prints using clay and paints.

Creation of Subtractive Monotype with Gabriel Jules

Saturday, August 24

10:00am to 3:00pm

\$15 per person

During a workshop with artist Gabriel Jules, participants will have the opportunity to learn about the process of monoprinting while creating a subtractive monotype. While Currier & Ives successfully utilized the process of lithography to produce thousands of prints over the course of seven decades, many printmakers found other methods more appealing. Monoprinting, also known as the most painterly method among the printmaking techniques, is essentially a printed painting. The appeal of the monoprint is in its spontaneity and its combination of printmaking, painting and drawing mediums. A series of four children's printmaking activities have also been scheduled.

**Lecture: The History of Collecting
Currier & Ives-The Best 50
Saturday, September 14
4:00 to 5:00pm | Free**

Dr. Donald Cresswell, co-owner of The Philadelphia Print Shop, Ltd., will address the appreciation, connoisseurship, and collecting of antique prints. Dr. Cresswell purchases, sells and appraises antique prints, and has lectured around the country on many related topics, including Currier & Ives, and has appeared as an expert print appraiser on "Antiques Road-Show." Dr. Cresswell will discuss the process involved in evaluating works of art based on the style and technique in order to attribute authorship, validate authenticity and appraise quality. He will also explore the differences between the original and new lists. An exhibition of Currier and Ives prints from The Philadelphia Print Shop, Ltd. will be on view prior to the lecture starting at 1:00 p.m.

High resolution photography of the exhibition is available upon request. For additional information visit www.BiggsMuseum.org or call (302) 674-2111 ext. 105.

About the Museum

The Biggs Museum seeks to serve a diverse public as a regional museum of fine and decorative arts, made from 1700 to present, representing the State of Delaware and the surrounding Mid-Atlantic region. The Biggs Museum engages audiences through a compelling program of temporary exhibitions and programming. The Biggs Museum encourages the development of creativity and an appreciation for art by offering a comprehensive slate of educational programming for all ages. The Biggs Museum of American Art is a private, non-profit 501(c) (3) organization.

Hours of Operation: Tuesday through Saturday; 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Sunday; 1:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Admission: Biggs Museum is free to the public year-round. Fees may apply to certain programs and special events.

The Biggs Museum of American Art
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